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IN THE WOOD.

BY A. Y. R.

In the wood walks alone,
With the sad dying year,
While the winds sob and moan,
And the dead leaves are thrown
Dry, drifted and sere,
In the wood walks alone.

The old days we have known
All sustained by a tear;
While the winds sob and moan,
Dressed in seeming long gone,
Hover living and near,
In the wood walks alone.

The great branches groan
Like to mortals in fear,
While the winds sob and moan;
For the months are laid prone
On their black, sodden bier,
In the wood walks alone,
While the winds sob and moan.

TRIED AS BY FIRE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "STRANGERS STILL," "PRINCE AND PEASANT," "THE LIGHTS OF ROCKBY," "A WOMAN'S SIN," ETC.

CHAPTER XII.

AUSTIN AMBROSE did not hesitate a moment. He had well calculated his plans, and he knew that if he meant to tell anything to the sharp Miss Lottie he must tell all. Half confidences could be of no use.

"Look here, Lottie," he said, "I am going to confide in you because I know that you are unlike most women, inasmuch as you can, if you like, hold your tongue."

"Thanks," she said, watching him closely; "that's a compliment for me. I really think you do mean business, you are so very polite."

"I told you I wanted you to help me, and you can't help me unless you know all I know. Blair is not going to marry Miss Graham, but a young woman whom I have not seen, whom I never heard of—nor anyone else. She is, I believe, a kind of servant——"

Lottie sat up open-eyed.

"What!" she exclaimed; and the color came into her face again.

If Lord Blair had been going to marry Miss Graham, she would have regarded it as a matter of course, but that he should be going to throw himself away upon a "kind of servant" was more than she could bear with equanimity.

"It is true," said Austin Ambrose.

"Blair—Blair of all people!—going to make such a fool of himself as that! Why, he must be out of his mind!"

Austin Ambrose shrugged his shoulders.

"I think he is," he said coolly. "I never saw him so mad. He simply raves about her like a schoolboy. She's everything that is beautiful and angelic. Oh! he is most completely gone, my dear Lottie."

Lottie bit her lip.

"The nicest and handsomest fellow in London," she murmured. To be picked up by a—a slavey! What a beastly shame it is! What a fool he must be! What is her name?"

"Margaret Hale," said Austin Ambrose instantly. "You understand, Lottie, that I am telling you what I would tell no one else."

She nodded.

"And it is about this you came to see me?" she asked.

"Yes," he said; "I want you to help me save Blair from this folly. Of course it would ruin him. He'd never be able to hold up his head again."

"He'd get tired of her in a week. I know him so well," she said, in a low voice.

"Exactly. In less than a week, perhaps, and then——" he shrugged his shoulders.

"And she would be the Viscountess Leyton, and, of course, the Countess Ferrers when the old man died!" for Lottie knew her Peerage pretty well.

"Yes, and we must prevent that," he said, looking at her.

She made an impatient gesture.

"I don't care about the title, and all that," she said; "why should I? If he had been going to marry Miss Graham, or any other of the swells, why—why it would be all right, and I shouldn't complain; but a servant! Blair, too! Why, he's as proud as Lucifer, really, though, people wouldn't think it! He'd be wretched for life! He'd be fit to cut his throat a week afterwards, and he's too good for that sort of thing."

There was a pause. She drank some of the stout, for her lips felt dry, then she said, more to herself than him:

"Yes, he's far too good! Poor Blair! Why, the very first diamonds I ever had he gave me. He'd have given me the top brick off the chimney if I'd asked for it! You won't believe it because you don't believe anything, Mr. Ambrose, but I tell you I'd do anything for Lord Blair! I never told you when I first met him?"

"No," said he.

Lottie took another draught of the stout, and her color came and went.

"It was when I was singing at the South Audley Music Hall. I wasn't much of a singer then, and one night I sang worse than usual; I was ill too, and out of sorts, and the people—they aren't the most refined at the South Audley, you know—they cut up rough and began to hiss and shout. I was only a slip of a girl, and I got frightened—too frightened to run off, and one brute of a fellow took up a wineglass from one of the tables and flung it at me. I suppose I must have fainted, for the next thing I remember was finding myself in a young gentleman's arms. It was Lord Blair. He'd sprung on the stage and caught me, and I shall never forget till the day of my death, the look on his face as he looked down at them. 'I'll give a sovereign to anyone who will keep that fellow in the hall till I come back!' he said, and though he didn't shout it, you could hear his voice all over the hall. Then he carried me into the green room, and got me some wine, and put me into a cab, as if I was a lady! Just as if I was a lady, mind! Then he went back to the hall, and it was a bad time for that brute with the glass, I expect."

She paused a minute and caught her lip between her teeth.

"We didn't meet again for three or four years, and he didn't know me. I was a woman then, and he had grown into a man. I daresay he'd forgotten all about the girl he protected at the South Audley, and I didn't remind him. But I haven't forgotten it. No!" and she made an impatient dash at her eyes, as if ashamed of the moisture which had made them suddenly dim.

Austin Ambrose listened and watched.

Everything was going admirably. If he could keep her in this frame of mind he would get what he wanted. Austin Ambrose was a clever man, but in nothing was he cleverer than in knowing exactly of what his tools were made. Men and women, who are as sealed books to most of us were open pages of legible type for him.

"That's like Blair," he said. "He's a good fellow."

"A good fellow!" she exclaimed almost fiercely; "that's what you say of any man who is free with his money and can make himself pleasant. Blair is more than that; he's—he's——" she paused for want of a word, then wound up emphatically, "he's a gentleman!"

"Too good a gentleman to be wasted on Miss Margaret Hale!" said Austin Ambrose insidiously.

"Yes!" she assented as fiercely as before. "What is to be done? I suppose you have got some plan? You generally have your wits about you. But why are you so keen about this business?" she added suspiciously.

"Simply out of pure good nature," he said. "Don't look so incredulous, my dear Lottie. Permit me to possess some good nature as well as yourself. Blair and I are old and fast friends. I don't think I ever told you, but one confidence deserves another, and I will tell you now. Blair once saved my life. If it had not been for him I should have been lying at the bottom of the Thames."

Lottie nodded.

"They say it's the worst thing you can do for yourself to save another person's life. I don't say he saved mine, but he did me a good turn, and—and—well, I expect now he wishes he had never seen me, and I daresay he'd have been all the better off if he hadn't. And as for you—well, Mr. Ambrose, I don't see why you should not want to do him a good turn."

"I do," he said. "And I couldn't do him a better turn than by preventing this marriage. And now, Lottie, I will tell you plainly that this marriage can be prevented if you will lend me a hand."

"How?" she asked.

"Lottie, you are a good actress," he said slowly; "I always said so, and I always thought so. I want you to prove it. I have a little plot, as you surmised, and I want you to play a part in it. It's a difficult one, but you can play it if you like. And, Lottie, if you do play it well, why, I'll see what I can do in getting you an engagement at the Coronet."

Lottie's face flushed. An engagement at the Coronet was one of the dramatic prizes.

"You will? But you needn't take the trouble to bribe me. I don't want anything for helping Blair out of this mess," she said; "I'll do it for—for auld lang syne!"

"That's right, Lottie," he said; "but you shall get your engagement at the Coronet all the same. And now I'll tell you what I mean to do."

He leant forward, and began to speak in a low, impressive voice, and Lottie Belvoir listened, her eyes fixed on his face. Suddenly she started and turned pale.

"I say! Isn't that rather—rather strong?" she said.

"Rather strong?" he murmured blandly.

"Rather risky?" she responded. "I—I don't much like it. Seems to me that it's a part which might land me—well, I don't know where."

"My dear Lottie, there is no risk, or very little," he said, with a cool laugh. "What can happen to you?"

"I don't know; a good many things if I were to be found out," she retorted. "Especially if Blair found it out!" and her face grew paler. "You don't know what Blair is when his temper is up. I've seen him, and probably you haven't."

"But there will be no need to get in his way," said Austin Ambrose. "Directly the thing is done, and your part is played, you can get away for awhile, go to Paris, or where you like. I'll find the money. You may look upon yourself as engaged to me for a term, just as if I were manager of a theatre."

Still she hesitated, biting her lip softly and looking at him with apprehension.

"I don't like it," she said, in a low voice. "It—it seems like playing it very low down on her—and him, too! And if it failed! Good Lord, Mr. Ambrose!"

"It will not fail," he said calmly and confidently. "I will take care that it shall not fail. I'm responsible for this little plot, and, from mere pride in it, I shall see that it comes off all right. Where is the difficulty? You have hardly a dozen lines to speak and a few others to make up, as the occasion may demand, and your own wit, Lottie, will supply you with those."

"Oh, that is easy enough," she said, with a wave of her hand. "I could play the part well enough! I see myself at it now!" and her face took color and her eyes began to glow. "It is a part I should do to perfection. And I shouldn't be at a loss for gagging if it were needed, but——"

"But what?" he said softly.

"But I don't fancy it all the same. It's risky and dangerous, and"—she stopped for a moment and looked at his cool, set face keenly—"Mr. Ambrose, I suppose if I got found out, they could send me to prison?"

His face did not alter in the slightest.

"Nonsense!" he said. "Prison! What an absurd notion! Besides, who could find you out? I'm surprised, Lottie, that you should hesitate. I thought you were a girl of spirit!"

"I've spirit enough," she said grimly. "I've spirit enough for most things. For instance, if a man were to throw a glass at me now, I shouldn't faint, but I should throw it back at him—well, this is quite a different thing!"

"It is all in your line," he argued.

She remained silent, and he leant back and shrugged his shoulders.

"Well, I suppose poor Blair will have to drift to the dogs, then! I am surprised; I must say I am surprised, Lottie. I did think that you were as good and staunch a friend of his as I am, and I thought I'd only to tell you the plight in which he stood, and show you how to help one to save him. I thought you'd jump at it. But never mind. I don't want to persuade you against your will; but I tell you plainly that if you won't help me, I shall go to no one else—I shall let things slide. I'm sorry for Blair; I am, indeed, very sorry, but——" he reached for his hat.

"Wait," she said, and her voice sounded dry and troubled, "give me a minute."

He leant back and watched her from beneath his lowered lids, while she leant her head on her hands, her intelligent face all puckered with thought.

Then she looked up suddenly.

"I'll do it," she said, with sharp decision.

Austin Ambrose's eyes flashed, then he smiled coolly.

"Of course you will. I can't think why you should hesitate. Why, my dear Lottie, no woman of spirit could sit down idly and see an old flame picked up by a mere nobody of a girl, a kind of servant——"

"That will do," she broke in, his words affecting her as he intended. "I've said I'll do it, and I will, let the consequences be what they may. But mind, you have promised to stand by me?"

"Certainly I will," he said promptly, "and you shall have the engagement at the Coronet, as well as the satisfaction of feeling that you have saved Blair from ruining his life, and an old title from disgrace."

"Hang the title!" she exclaimed carelessly; "it's Blair I'm thinking of. And—and when will you want me?"

"I can't tell you now," he said. "I may want you at any moment, so that you must hold yourself in readiness! I suppose you will dress the part carefully?"

She looked up and smiled.

"You can trust me to do that!" she said. "Wait! Take another cigar; there's some more whisky there. I won't keep you ten minutes," and she got up and ran from the room.

She was scarcely gone ten minutes when

there came a knock at the door.

"Come in," he said, and a fair-haired lady, dressed in black, with a pale face and dark hollows under her eyes, with quivering lips and shaking hands, nervously and timidly entered the room.

Austin Ambrose rose with some surprise and embarrassment.

"Do you wish to see Miss Belvoir?" he said quietly.

The lady threw up her hands to her face and broke into passionate sobs; then suddenly they changed into peals of laughter, and, whipping off the bonnet and wig, Lottie herself stood before him.

"Will that do?" she demanded.

He nodded emphatic approval.

"Excellent! You nearly took me in, my dear Lottie, and I was prepared for you! Capital!"

"Oh, I can do better than that!" she said half contemptuously, as she wiped the paint and powder from her face with her handkerchief. "But it isn't the make-up I shall rely on so much as the acting. I flatter myself that I can play the part to a nicety. It mustn't be over-done, you know; and it mustn't be taken too slowly! Oh, I know! You leave it to me, Mr. Ambrose?"

"That's just what I meant to do!" he said. "I place every confidence in you, my dear Lottie!"

"And you'll come and see me in prison on visiting days?" she said, with a smile that was rather serious.

"Yes," he said, laughing lightly, "I'll come and see you, and bring you a tract. But all that is nonsense! There is not the slightest risk of such a thing. Once you have played your part, you shall be off to Paris and take your fling for a month or two."

"All this will cost you something," she said thoughtfully.

He shrugged his shoulders.

"It isn't a question of money on such an occasion as this," he said; "and I daresay Blair will be only too glad to pay all the expenses when he comes to his senses, and finds who it is that has saved him from committing social suicide. He will owe us a deep debt of gratitude, Lottie."

"I hope he'll think so," she said, rather doubtfully, and with a little shudder; "if he shouldn't—well, I don't think Paris will be far enough off for me, and for you"—and she smiled strangely and significantly—"well, I wouldn't care to insure your life, Mr. Ambrose."

He laughed as he shook hands with her.

"My dear Lottie, Blair will know that we have been his best friends, and will be grateful accordingly. Good-night! Mind, not a word to a soul!"

"No," said Lottie grimly; "I'm not likely to proclaim this business from the house-tops. This is a play that it will be best not to advertise. Good-night!"

CHAPTER XIII.

LORD BLAIR'S passionate avowal had taken Margaret so completely by surprise that even yet she had scarcely realised what this was that had happened to her.

She had read of love, had painted it, but hitherto she and it had been perfect strangers; and now!—and now all the wonderful and mysterious sweetness of it suffused her whole being.

"He loves me!—he loves me!" she found herself repeating over and over again in a species of half-unconscious rapture; and as she murmured the significant words, she hid her face in her hand, and the words she had spoken came surging back on her ears and in her heart, and she could still feel his hot, passionate kisses on her face and hair.

All the next day she lived like one in a dream.

She never asked herself whether she had acted wisely or even rightly in listening to him, or promising to meet him again. Wisdom and propriety were swamped and overwhelmed by the full tide of love which had taken possession of her.

For a greater part of the day she sat in the garden beside the splashing fountain, making no attempt at work; she felt that she could scarcely hold the brush, least of all do any serious work. How could she paint when her heart was throbbing, her hand trembling with this new joy, which in its sweetness was almost an agony?

Once there flashed upon her the thought that she ought to tell her grandmother, but the same instant she felt that it would be impossible. It would be like a sacrilege to utter a word of this new mystery which she had discovered. Besides she had not yet given him his answer. It would be time enough to ask Mrs. Hale after that.

In the evening she wandered slowly to the glade, and rested on the spot where she had sat the day before; and there she re-enacted the whole scene so vividly that she could almost believe he was really present, kneeling at her side, and holding her hand.

Supposing she said "Yes," supposing she confessed that she loved him, what would happen? What would the great earl say, the world at large? He was a viscount, the heir to the Leyton title and the Leyton wealth, while she—she was the granddaughter of his uncle's housekeeper.

With a sigh, she leaned her head on her hand, and tried to think it out; but she could not think. A great joy, like a great pain, makes thought impossible.

The day passed, she scarcely knew how, and the night. She slept some hours, but her sleep was full of dreams, in which Lord Leyton was the predominant figure; the handsome face may be said to have hovered about her pillow; and when she awoke, flushed and quivering, it was to have the sense of her great joy sweeping over her anew like an overwhelming flood.

"Margaret, my dear, you look pale," said Mrs. Hale at breakfast. "It's the heat. I wouldn't go painting in the gallery to-day. It's hot there, and the colors must give you a headache, I should think. If I were you, I'd go and sit in the woods; there is some shade there, and it's cool, especially near the cascade."

Margaret colored furiously. It almost seemed as if Mrs. Hale had got an inkling of her appointment with Lord Blair.

"I will go to the woods, grandma," she said; and she put her arm round the old lady's neck, and laid her soft cheek against the withered one.

"Yes, my dear," said Mrs. Hale, "you can go there quite safely, for the earl never walks there even when he does go out, and Lord Leyton's gone. But you won't disturb the birds, Margaret, will you? Mr. Simpson, the head keeper, is so particular."

"No, I will do no harm, grandma," Margaret said, and she got her hat and went to the woods.

It was a lovely morning; the birds were singing in full note; the butterflies were flitting from wild flower to wild flower; the miniature cascade made a delicious music. But it and the birds seemed to sing the same song for Margaret:

Surely, if she lived to be a hundred, whatever happened in her life, she should never forget this spot, sacred to her in the first passion that had ever stirred her maiden heart. Always before her eyes in the future would rise this glade at Leyton woods; always would she hear the ceaseless babble of the brook, the song of the linnets!

She had not long to wait. There came a quick firm step—she knew it so well, although it had come into her life so recently—and with a spring like a boy's, Lord Blair was beside her, not only beside her but on one knee.

For a moment he seemed unable to speak, and the color came and went on his tanned cheek.

"Do you know," he said, with a smile, and in that hushed, lingering voice which love takes to itself, "all the way I have been tormenting myself with the dread that you wouldn't come!"

"I said that I would come!" she said, with downcast eyes.

"I know! And I ought to have known that you would rather die than break your given word! But I thought that perhaps you would be prevented, that you might have told someone—Mrs. Hale——"

"I have told no one," said Margaret, with a sudden feeling of gratitude.

"That is right," he said; then, as the shadow swept over her face, he went on quickly: "Not that I should have cared for myself! No! I would like all the world to know how I love you: not that they could do that. Not even you can guess at that Margaret. But I should like to tell everybody that I love you, and that—but, ah, Margaret, you haven't told me yet! Are you going to let me stay? Are you going to let me go on loving you? Dearest, you have not come to be hard and cruel to me! You will say 'yes'?" and he held out his arms to her.

Margaret sat silent for a moment, then raised her eyes; they seemed heavy with love's mysterious shyness, and she breathed the word that gave her to him.

His arms closed round her, and he held her to him in one passionate kiss until, half-frightened, she drew away from him.

There was a silence between them then, and they sat hand in hand in that communion of spirit which is only permitted to us poor mortals once in a life

To him she was the embodiment of all that was beautiful and good. To her he was the epitome of all that was handsome and brave; and he was to be good also now for had he not said that her love should be his salvation?

After a time they began to talk, as newly-made lovers do talk. Short little sentences, full of delicious meaning; small nothings, which represented the sum of all things to them.

Then Blair said suddenly:

"Dearest, you said you had told no one: Mrs. Hale, or anyone, about our meeting?"

"No," she assented.

"That was right, Margaret," he said. "I don't want you to tell anyone."

She looked at him trustingly but with a vague surprise.

"Do you mind, dear?" he asked. "If so, if you would rather this were told, we will go together, you and I, and then we will go to the earl——"

"No, no!" said Margaret shrinking from such an ordeal, and longing—girl-like—to keep her delicious secret to herself, for a little while longer.

"It shall be as you wish, dearest," he said frankly; "but there are reasons why it would be better for us to say nothing about our engagement! Look here, Margaret," he went on earnestly, "I spoke the truth just now, when I said that I would like to proclaim my happiness to all the world, but I'm afraid it wouldn't be a good thing to do! It would be better not to do so for your sake."

"For mine!" she said, looking into his eyes with a tender questioning.

"Yes. I don't want you to lose anything by your goodness to me, dear; that's natural enough isn't it? And I am afraid you would lose a great deal if we declared our engagement."

"What should I lose?" she asked?"

"You know, dear," he answered, "that I am the heir to my uncle's title and estates."

"I know," said Margaret.

She would not wound him by reminding him that she was the grand-daughter of the earl's housekeeper and penniless.

"Well, that's very good; and I wish I were the King of England, that I could make you the Queen Madge!" he said with a smile. "But in addition to the title and estates, mine uncle has a great deal of money, and if he likes he can leave that to us, or to anybody else!"

"To us!" said Margaret. "To you!"

"I and you are one, dear," he said simply, "Now, so far as I am concerned, I don't care a fig for the money; but I don't think I ought to rob you of it!"

"And I care less than a fig!" she said.

His face cleared from the faint shadow which had dwelt upon it while he had been speaking.

"You don't! Madge, you don't know how glad you make me! I might have known that you would not care about it! Let it go! I would rather let a million slip than there should be any concealment! We'll go and tell him at once—or I'll go, and fetch you afterwards! I know you'd say so, even while Austin was advising me!"

"Austin? Who is Austin?" she asked.

"What an idiot I am!" he exclaimed, with a laugh. "I am talking if you knew everybody I know; and everything I know! You see, it seems as if I had known you for years, and that we had been one since we were boy and girl!"

She laid her hand timidly on his head, and lovingly smoothed the black clustered hair.

"Austin is Austin Ambrose," he went on; "and the best fellow in the world. He is the greatest friend I have, Madge, and I want you to like him awfully."

"I like him already if he is a friend of yours,—Blair," she said.

His face flushed as she let his name fall from her lips for the first time.

"He is a great, true friend," he said. "I was lucky enough to be on the spot when he got the cramp bathing, and I lugged him out and the foolish fellow can't forget it."

"How very foolish," said Margaret. "You saved his life, Blair?"

"So he says; but he makes the most of it. Anyway, we have been fast friends ever since, and—you won't mind, Madge!—I told him how I had met and fallen in love with you. I was bound to tell someone or go mad, and I have always told him everything."

"I do not mind—why should I?" said Margaret, smiling. "And I had no one to tell."

"Poor Margaret," he murmured, smiling up at her tenderly.

"And what did Mr. Ambrose say? What a pretty name it is—almost as pretty as Blair Leyton!"

"Well, he was awfully pleased of course," said Blair. "Anything that pleases me pleases him."

"I shall be a little jealous," murmured Margaret.

He laughed.

"You needn't be. Not even Austin could come between you and me," dearest," he said. "He was awfully pleased and—and all that, but he thought of this property. He is one of those cute long-headed fellows, you know, darling, who are always looking to the future, and it was he who wanted us to keep it secret."

"He knows that I am so unfit, so unworthy," said Margaret, in a low voice, and with a sudden pang.

Blair's face flushed, and he looked up at her reproachfully.

"Don't ever say that, Madge," he pleaded; "it hurts me."

"Forgive me, Blair!" she whispered. "But he did think so, did he not?"

"I don't care what he thought," he said firmly. "And whatever he thought, he will have only one idea when he sees you, and that is that you are a million times too good for me."

"Poor Blair!" she murmured.

"And, Margaret, I want you to see him very soon. I want you to feel that he is your friend as well as mine."

He paused for a moment, looking at her steadily, and then went on:

"Madge, he is down at Leyton now."

"At Leyton now—here?" said Margaret, with momentary surprise.

Blair nodded.

"Yes. He was so anxious to see you, that I asked him to come down with me. Shall I tell you why I did so?"

"Yes," said Margaret. "Tell me everything!"

A strange feeling scarcely of dread—how could it be?—had crept over her.

"Everything!" he repeated emphatically. "From this moment I will not have a thought you shall not share dearest! Well then, I didn't know what your answer would be, Madge, and I felt so afraid of myself; I know what a stupid idiot I am when I want to say anything and can't, that I brought him to plead for me if it should be necessary."

"It was not necessary," she murmured, and he kissed her hand.

"He held out at first, and wouldn't hear of coming, but I persuaded him at last; poor old Austin can't refuse me anything! so he came with me. He is waiting at the stile, in case you will condescend to see him."

Margaret shrank a little. She could not guess that though Lord Blair fully believed that it was he who had persuaded Austin Ambrose to come against his will, it had really been his own suggestion artfully made.

"I will do as you wish, Blair," she said. "Yes," she added quickly, "I will see him."

After all, she could not even seem to be cold to her lover's closest friend.

Blair sprang to his feet.

"He will be so glad, Margaret!" he said. "He is the best fellow in the world and the wisest; and he is dreadfully afraid that you may not like him."

"Bring him, and I will put him out of his misery," said Margaret with her divine smile. "Do you think that I should not love all you love, and hate all you hate, Blair?"

"You are an angel," he said, looking at her; "yes, that is what you are!"

She put her hands against his breast and pushed him gently away from her.

"Go and fetch him," she said, and he strode away.

Austin Ambrose was seated on the stile smoking a cigarette. He greeted Blair with a nod and a smile.

"Well, my Adonis! Well, my Corydon! Have you come to tell me that the beloved mistress declines to see the intruder?"

"Ah, you don't know her yet, old fellow!" said Lord Blair, with all a lover's pride. "She has sent me to bring you to her at once! My friends shall be her friends, and you, Austin, shall rank first."

Austin Ambrose flung his cigarette away and smiled.

"Then she made you a happy man, Blair? All doubts dispelled, eh?"

"She has made me the happiest man in all the world," said Blair, almost solemnly.

"At any rate she is good-natured," said Ambrose. "Most women would have sent me to the right-about——"

"Not Margaret! not Margaret!" broke in Blair. "Wait till you see her and hear her talk, old fellow!"

"Well, I sha'n't have long to wait," he said, as he caught sight of Margaret's dress.

The next moment he stood before her.

Mr. Austin Ambrose was a man who had raised the art of concealing his emotions and his thoughts to a positive science;

therefore he neither started nor uttered an exclamation as his eye fell upon Margaret Hale; but a swift and sharp surprise and astonishment went through him like the stab of a dagger.

She had risen at the sound of their footsteps, and stood upright before him in all her beauty, and with all her infinite grace; and instead of the pretty, hoydenish, middle-class young woman he had pictured, Austin Ambrose found himself confronted by a girl who was not only lovely, but refined, and, in short—a lady!

There is a story of an assassin—when that useful class existed in Italy—who was employed by a wealthy noble to stab a lady who had offended him. The assassin made his bargain and sharpened his weapon, but on seeing his victim, flung his dagger in the Tiber, and returning to his employer, tossed the blood-money at his feet.

"What is the matter?" demanded the noble. "Cannot you find her?"

"Yes, milord," said the man.

"And you have not killed her? Why not? You promised, fellow!"

"Yes, I promised," said the man, "but I had not seen her then!"

For a moment Austin Ambrose may have felt as the Italian assassin did, but it was only for a moment. The next his gray eyes flashed, and a keen delight, the delight of a man who meets a foeman worthy of his steel, took possession of him.

There would have been little credit in outwitting a love-sick, half-educated girl of the middle-class, who was smitten by the desire of being Viscountess Leyton; but to outwit and deceive this superb creature, with the face of a goddess and the manners of a lady! There would be some satisfaction in that. And he would do it, too.

But not a sign of this showed itself in his calm, set face, as he bent before her; instead one might well have thought him rather stupid and easy-going, and certainly very good-natured.

And Margaret? For a moment she was conscious of a feeling of repulsion, of dread, and almost of dislike, but she fought it down, and instead of responding to his respectful and almost reverential inclination of the head with a formal bow, she held out her hand.

"This is very good, very gracious of you, Miss Hale! To accept the acquaintance of a stranger so suddenly——"

"No friend of Lord Blair's must be a stranger to me," she said, with a blush.

Blair took her hand and kissed it, and he looked at Austin Ambrose triumphantly.

"Thank you, thank you," Austin murmured, as if deeply touched. "Miss Hale, I can understand Blair's fascination, he should be the happiest man in England this June morning!"

Margaret blushed still more vividly, and Blair colored, too, but with pleasure.

"I forgot to tell you, Madge," he said, "that Ambrose is a perfect dab at fine speeches."

"And a martyr to truth," said Austin Ambrose. "And you are sure that you can quite forgive me for intruding this morning?"

"There is nothing to forgive, I am very glad," Margaret said simply.

Blair drew her gently to her old seat, and then threw himself down at her feet. Austin Ambrose seated himself on the bank a little above and in front of them.

"Lord Blair and I are such old friends, Miss Hale," he said presently, "that I suppose neither one of us would think of doing anything important without consulting each other. Not that Blair consulted me," he added quickly. "He had made up his mind before he spoke to me, and would not have dreamed of consulting Solomon himself if he had been alive. And I think he was right!"

"Two very outspoken compliments," said Blair, laughing with pleasure. "And it's a poor return, old fellow, to tell you that we have made up our minds not to take your advice. I am going to send an announcement of our engagement to the society papers to-night—after I have seen my uncle."

Austin Ambrose nodded and smiled as if he were rather pleased than otherwise.

"That is delightful!" he said genially. "Lovers should always be imprudent! Yes, I like the idea very much!"

Margaret glanced from the clear-cut self-possessed face to Blair's handsome, careless one, and her eyes grew troubled.

"Is it so imprudent," she said softly.

"Very, deliciously so!" said Austin laughing. "And that is why I like it. Lovers should always be unwise and reckless! It is, as Doctor Watts observed, 'their nature to!' Miss Hale, I have one weak spot, amongst many, and you will discover it presently, I daresay. I am foolishly romantic. Anything in the shape of sentiment conquers me directly. I assure you that when Blair came and told me that he had met and lost his heart to the most beautiful young lady in the world, I felt as if I had lost mine, and I was so anxious—well, nearly as anxious, as he was to learn whether he was to be the happiest or the most miserable of men."

Blair laughed, Margaret smiled, but she was fighting against the strange repulsion which grew more distinct with every word the supple lips uttered.

"Yes," he went on. "And the idea of your going hand in hand to the earl and saying, 'My lord, we mean to be married. We don't care whether you like it or not, we defy you. You may leave us your immense wealth, or you may bequeath it to the Home for Lost Dogs, we don't care. We love each other, and that is enough. My lord, good morning!' Now that is delightful! It is imprudent, it is reckless, and—and—well, yes—foolish; but it is so charming, so perfectly romantic, that I can't help admiring it."

Margaret's eyes grew more troubled. Blair smiled no longer.

"I say, Austin!" he expostulated.

Austin held up his finger.

"No, no! I won't hear a word said against it. I have a distinct conviction that the whole romance—and what a charming romance it is!—would be completely spoiled by one word of wisdom, and I am very sorry that I ever uttered one! Here, in Miss Hale's presence I make full recantation, and implore her forgiveness for ever having harbored one sordid thought concerning her! Let the earl's fortune go to the winds!" and he waved his hand dramatically. "With Miss Hale's love, my darling Blair, you will be the richest man in England, although you should be the poorest peer!"

"You are right!" exclaimed Blair, pressing Margaret's hand. "Those are the truest words you ever spoke, old fellow!" Eh, Margaret?" he whispered.

She sat silently looking at Austin Ambrose's face.

Though he had not said so in so many words, he had as good as told her that by marrying Lord Blair she would deprive him of his uncle's fortune.

The color came and went in her face, her eyes grew downcast, while both men looked at her, Blair with loving adoration, Austin Ambrose with a covert and concealed intentness.

At last she looked up—at Blair, not at Austin.

"It must not be known," she said in a low voice.

"Margaret!" exclaimed Blair astonished; but Austin Ambrose, watching her eyes, gave a slight, a very slight nod of approval.

"No," she said. "Mr. Ambrose is—is right! You shall not make such a sacrifice for me, Blair."

Her face flushed, her eyes shone with the fire of a woman's resolution to sacrifice herself rather than injure the man she loves. "We—we will not tell anyone!"

Austin Ambrose raised his hat and looked at her with a fine assumption of admiration.

"That was nobly spoken Miss Hale," he said gravely, "nobly and wisely. I am too much Blair's friend, and yours, if you will permit me, to conceal my anxiety on your account. You would sacrifice not his future alone, but yours, for it would be yours, you know, by doing anything rash. The earl is an eccentric old gentleman, and easily offended. It would be worse than folly to do so. You have made a wise decision, Miss Hale, and you have added respect to my admiration!" and he bowed.

"Well!" exclaimed Blair, half amused, half annoyed. "You two are beyond me! Why, half an hour ago, Madge, you were aghast at our keeping our engagement secret and now——"

"Miss Hale had not considered the matter in all its bearings," broke in Austin, gently and smoothly. "Trust me, Blair, she has more sense in her little finger than you have in all your great, hulking body."

"I know that," said Blair, with a good-humored laugh. "You've found it out already, have you? Didn't I tell you that she was as clever as she was beautiful? My Margaret!"

"Your Margaret is far too clever to let you say such silly things," Margaret murmured, blushing.

Austin rose and smiled down upon them, and his cold gray eyes seemed to grow really benevolent, as if he were blessing them.

"I will go now," he said. "Miss Hale, this has been a happy day for me, as well as for Blair. He has found a sweetheart, and I have found, I trust, a friend. May I say that?" he asked, as he held out his hand.

"Yes," said Margaret, trying to speak heartily.

He took her hand and raised it to his lips.

"Then you must let me prove myself one. You are both young and perfectly imprudent. You must promise not to do anything without coming to me first. This is all I ask. Is it too much?"

"Not a bit, old fellow!" said Blair, showing his delight at the impression Margaret had made upon the wise and cynical Ambrose. "We are a couple of spoons you know, and not fit to be trusted to act alone, eh?"

"Honestly, I don't think you are," said Austin smilingly.

"All right!" said Blair. "We've taken your advice—at least Margaret has—and the least you can do, having accepted the responsibility, is to see us safely through, eh?"

Austin Ambrose nodded.

"Yes," he said simply. "I'll go and see if the dog-cart is ready, and drive it to the end of the lane. You will find me there. You have no idea the precautions we have taken, Miss Margaret," he added, with a smile. "We just drew the line at coming down in disguise! Good-bye!" and with a wave of his hand he pushed through the underwood and left them.

He stopped at a distance of a hundred yards to get a cigarette, and was putting it to his mouth with a smile of cynical satisfaction, as he thought of the way in which he had gained his point, when his quick eye saw something moving at a little distance between him and the spot where he had left the lovers.

He thought it was a rabbit at first, but, looking intently, he saw it was a man's fur cap.

"A cap doesn't move without a head in it," he murmured, and putting his cigarette in his pocket, he made a detour round some trees and crept close to the object.

As he did so, he saw that a man was lying full length in the long bracken, through which he had made a clearing just before his face, so that he could watch Blair and Margaret. Austin grew interested, and crept a little nearer.

Poachers do not work in the daytime, and besides, this man had no gun, but a thick stick lay near his hand.

Austin watched him thoughtfully, then a look of intelligence flashed into his face. Blair had described the man he thrashed on Leyton Green: this was he, this was Jem Pyke! Amongst Austin Ambrose's great gifts was a faculty of never forgetting a face or a name.

Lowering himself noiselessly, he sat down just behind the man, and, after waiting a minute or two, coughed slightly.

The man looked round with a start, then sprang to his feet and grasped his stick.

Mr. Ambrose looked him squarely in the face.

"Don't speak a word, my friend, or I shall call," he said.

Pyke looked uncertain, and then made ready for a spring; but the cold eyes—and they were like glittering steel now—held him fascinated.

"Not a word," said Austin, in a low distinct voice, "unless you want another thrashing, Mr. Pyke!"

Jem Pyke started, and he lowered the stick.

For a moment the two men looked into each other's eyes, then, with a smile, Austin got up leisurely and sauntered off, beckoning him to follow.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

SELLING GOODS BY WEIGHT.—It is but a question of a very short time, in our belief, when the sale of articles of food and other materials now disposed of by "dry measure" and by "count" will be conducted entirely by weight. The coal exchange has abolished the bushel, and all transactions in fuel both with receivers and with the consumer are by the ton. Wheat is handled in the elevators now by the hundredweight instead of the bushel. Potatoes and onions are sold by the pound in many groceries now instead of by measure. Eggs should be sold by weight, as the dozen plan is not satisfactory. There is a tendency to the adoption of the metrical system in other lines, and the young man of to-day will see the present irregular measurement of inches, feet, yards, furlongs and miles succeeded by the less confusing system in use in France.

STRANGE that man should be given two ears and but one tongue, when, as everybody knows, he would rather talk all day than listen five minutes.

Bric-a-Brac.

AGE OF BIRDS.—We are told that the blackbird lives twelve years, blackcap fifteen, canary twenty-four, goose fifty, heron fifty-nine, lark thirteen, linnet twenty-five, nightingale fifteen, parrot sixty, partridge and pheasant fifteen, peacock twenty-four, pelican fifty, pigeon twenty, raven one hundred, robin twelve, skylark thirty.

TURKISH CHILDREN.—When a child is born in a Turkish house it is wrapped in red flannel (to guard against the evil eye, they say); then the parents fasten different things on the the cap, such as a piece of garlic, a horseshoe, a bit of old leather, three blue beads, as well as many gold coins. After eighty days, the father, having decided what name to give the child, goes behind the door of a room, and shouts out the name three times. This is the way they christen Turkish children.

QUEEN AND PEASANT.—Under the old empire in ancient Egypt, both queen and peasant woman, as a rule, wore the same close-fitting robe, which reached from the shoulders to the ankle; this was either supported by two straps somewhat like the modern braces worn by men, or it covered the shoulders and opened on the chest in V form. These dresses were made of linen, sometimes of an unbleached yellow hue, though white was preferred as the coolest and most cleanly.

IN AFRICA.—Among the Dinka tribes a traveler comes upon an ingenious method of utilizing snakes. These are secured by stratagem, and then a pool of water is enclosed by a strong thorn fence so arranged that the game coming to dring must pass through a narrow lane, the snakes, which are fastened by a hole bored through the tail, and placed near this opening, bite the animals as they attempt to pass. In this way a supply of game is always obtainable without the trouble of hunting.

WEDDING RINGS.—In speaking of wedding rings, we learn that these important symbols have not always been manufactured from the precious metal gold. We are told that in lieu of a ring the church key has often been used; and Walpole tells of an instance where a curtain ring was employed. Forgetful bridegrooms have been reduced to greater straits than this even; in one instance a leather ring had, on the spur of a moment to be cut out of a piece of kid from the bride's glove.

A PRIMITIVE "AD."—The earliest known example of a newspaper advertisement is to be found in the *Mercurius*, a London weekly of October 4, 1648. It is as follows: "The Reader is desired to peruse A Sermon Entitled 'A Looking-glass for Levellers,' Preached at St. Peter's, Paules Wharf, on Sunday, September 24, 1648, by Paul Knell, Mr. of Arts. Another Tract called 'A Reflex upon our Reformers' with a Prayer for the Parliament.'" This appears to have been a notice inserted at the charge of author or publisher, to induce a demand for the pamphlets at the booksellers' shops.

ANGEL AND ROSE.—A pretty fable of the angel and the rosebud says that "the angel who takes care of the flowers, and sprinkles upon them dew in the still night, slumbered on a spring day in the shade of a rosebush. When he awoke he said, 'Most beautiful of my children, I thank thee for thy refreshing odor and cooling shade. Could you now ask any favor, how willingly would I grant it!' 'Adorn me, then, with a new charm,' said the spirit of the rosebud, in a beseeching tone. So the angel adorned the loveliest of flowers with simple moss. Sweetly it stood there in its modest attire, the most rose, the most beautiful of its kind. So the costliest ornaments are often the simplest."

A JURY OF FLAMINGOES.—It appears that trial by jury is not unknown among the funny-looking long-shanked birds called flamingoes. While a sportsman was engaged in the chase of wild ducks among the brackish lagoons in the south of Spain, his attention was aroused by a hideous gabble. Wading in the direction whence the noise came, he found that an excited group of flamingoes were the disturbers of the peace. It was plain, from its downcast looks, that one of their number—which was standing in their midst—had sinned against the laws of their society, and that the others were discussing its conduct. They were all speaking at once, except one who was flapping his wings vigorously, as much as to say, "Stop this talking; let's punish him and be done with it." This seemed to be the general opinion for soon afterwards they fell upon the criminal and cruelly killed him. Then they took wing, uttering cries of approval that their laws had been upheld, but leaving behind, in a heap, the feathers and bones of their victim.

NEW AND OLD.

BY E. G. J.

The Old, so Wisdom saith, is better than the New.
Friends—like old Wine, old Books, old Days—
With age do ripen into mellower hue;
And Time, for what he takes, full oft repays
True hearts a hundredfold.

So, as the years rush by, old Friend,
May all bright memories of the past revive!
And when the hour is come to say "Good-night,"
May Peace and Hope be with us to the end,
Up to the fulness of unfading Light!
When by the mystery of Death shall live
Things New and Old.

For Love or Duty.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HIS MONEY AND HIS LOVE," "DOLLY'S DISAPPOINTMENT," "KING OR PRINCE?" ETC., ETC."

CHAPTER VI.—(CONTINUED.)

I WANTED to tell you that if anything should detain me until after dinner," he says, "I will certainly come and fetch you home."

"Oh, you need not trouble!" she murmurs, yet pleased at this mark of his care.

"Yes, I need. Besides, I really wish to come."

"Very well," she answers. Then the thought suddenly enters her head—"Ah, of course; he wants to see Edith!"

"But I quite expect to be there in time for dinner," he continues. "And, Juliet, how will this go with your dress? I want you to wear it to-night if you can."

He holds before her eyes a large locket of dull gold, set with a splendid diamond, which flashes brilliantly with every movement of his hand.

"How beautiful!" she exclaims involuntarily. "But do you mean—is it for me? Am I to wear it?"

"It is for you," he replies, and is about to fasten the thick gold chain round her neck, when she draws back in sudden confusion and distress.

"But, you must not," she begins. "I—it isn't—I have taken Edith from you—and Compton, too—I cannot accept presents from you now!"

"Very well," he says quietly. "If you feel like that about it I have no more to say."

He puts the locket down upon the table; but Juliet catches the look of deep displeasure on his darkening face as he turns away, and flies after him with a new terror at her heart.

He never looked like that before, not even when she made herself known to him in the railway car.

"Forgive me," she pants. "I did not mean that at all. I meant—I meant—"

"You meant you would not receive anything from me," looking at her with wrathful eyes.

"I meant that I did not like to—that I was ashamed to."

"Very well."

He is turning upon his heel again when she once more arrests his progress by laying a timid hand upon his arm.

"Sir Evelyn, if I may, I will accept your present, and thank you very much for it."

"Just as you please," he returns coldly, and goes back to the library without another word.

She fastens the gold chain round her neck herself then, standing before the mirror between the two windows, hoping, as she does so, that his displeasure may be averted when he sees her wearing it, but she cannot see the sparkle of the great diamond in the centre of the locket for the mist of tears in her eyes.

When she arrives at Compton Cheney she finds Colonel St. John and Randal Blakey walking up and down the terrace, and apparently on fairly good terms with each other.

Randal receives her with great warmth, having a very affectionate heart, if but a scanty allowance of brains.

"Where is Edith?" she inquires, almost immediately.

"Lying down in her room until it is time to dress. She was very tired; we crossed over this morning."

"May I go up to her?"

"Oh, yes! She left a message asking you to go to her when you came."

In a few minutes more she is kneeling beside her cousin's couch.

"Edith dear, I am so glad to see you again!" she says, kissing her.

"Juliet, is it really true that you and Sir Evelyn are lawfully husband and wife?" asks Edith, so full of wonder and curiosity that she almost forgets to return her cousin's kiss.

"Yes, Edith, we are bound to one another just as you and Randal are bound to one another."

"Fancy! And is he very terrible, Juliet? What did he say when he found you out?"

"He didn't say very much, he was too astonished, I think. But he soon discovered that I had no idea the marriage was binding, and showed me that it was."

"Has he quite got over it? Does he ever speak to you?"

"Oh, dear, yes!" replies Juliet, laughing, she feels a secret pang at her heart as she thinks of the recent misunderstanding. "I say anything that I wish to him, and so does he to me."

"Then you are on good terms together?" pursues Edith, looking at her curiously. "And you are Lady Lovelace, while I am only Mrs. Randal Blakey."

"Well, you don't mind that, do you?" says Juliet again. "You might have been Lady Lovelace if you had liked, but I could not have assumed your present position as Mrs. Randal Blakey."

"Is Sir Evelyn fond of you, Juliet?" Edith asks hesitatingly.

"You can see for yourself when he is here to-night," answers Juliet, rising from her knees, but she blushes, so that Edith immediately comes to the conclusion that Sir Evelyn is fond of her.

He arrives just in time to give Edith his arm and lead her to the head of the table, while Colonel St. John takes his niece, and Randal has to follow alone.

Edith treats Lovelace in a languidly coquettish manner, which is quite lost upon him, for he makes little response to her half-flattering speeches beyond a slight bow or a few cold words of acknowledgment; and, if he does not pay his wife any particular attention, he certainly does not bestow a single glance in the direction of her beautiful cousin.

If Edith Blakey expected to meet a resentful or reproachful lover, she is disappointed.

When the cousins retire to the drawing-room, they draw their chairs together near the fire—which the chilly spring weather still renders necessary—for a cosy chat.

"And where are you going to live, Edith?" commences Juliet. "Not at Chalvington with Randal's parents?"

"At Chalvington, but not with them. We have taken the Elms, about a quarter of a mile from the Lodge. It has been repaired while we were in Paris. I should have liked to come nearer to you, Juliet, but there was no house fit for us here, and the Blakeys want Randal near them—isn't it tiresome?"

Juliet, in her heart, is very thankful for this arrangement, for she begins to feel that the less that is seen and known of her life at Tenham the better.

"But we can pay long visits to each other," continues Edith placidly. Juliet blanches at the very idea. "You had better come to us first," adds Edith. "I suppose it wouldn't do for me to be visiting at Tenham just yet."

"Why not?" Juliet forces herself to ask.

"Why not?" repeats her cousin, with a little self-conscious laugh. "Why, a man does not generally care to see very much of the girl who has rejected him—at least, not until he has had plenty of time to get over it."

"But I thought you always said he did not care for you, that it was only to join the estates that he wanted to marry you," says Juliet in dismay.

"Yes, of course, dear; I always tried to believe that with all my heart, but you never know what those silent, self-contained men feel, after all."

Juliet remains silent, considerably astonished at this entirely new view of things; but presently, calling to mind certain opinions of Edith, expressed by her husband, she calms down again.

"I am sure," Edith goes on, "if he were as angry as father was, he must have cared for something more than Compton Cheney. Father was simply brutal, when we came here to-day. And, after all, it wasn't so much about our deceiving him and Sir Evelyn as about you, Juliet."

"About me!"

"Yes. He called it 'taking base advantage of your self-sacrificing generosity.' Fancy, Juliet! I am sure there does not seem much 'sacrifice' about it, you have got a splendid husband, a beautiful house to live in, and plenty of money, we are not half so well off as you are, and you are Lady Lovelace into the bargain!"

"Why, Edith," Juliet says, smiling, "you did not think him so very 'splendid' when you were engaged to him!"

"I think he has improved since I last saw him. And you certainly cannot say, Juliet, that he is not the handsomest man you ever met."

"Why, Edith," Juliet cries, laughing, "you did not think he was even good-looking before. Don't you remember, when I admired Sir Trevellyn's picture, you pitied my taste, and bade me compare him with Randal? You said—if I remember correctly—that he was 'a nasty, cross-looking man.'"

"I said that of the Sir Trevellyn in the picture, one person may resemble another almost exactly in features, and yet look very different."

Then, catching sight of the diamond flashing in the firelight—

"What a splendid locket you have on, Juliet! Who gave it to you?"

The suddenness of the question almost takes Juliet's breath away; but she collects herself, holding the locket to her breast as if she were in the presence of a would-be thief.

"My husband," she answers, and looks at her cousin almost defiantly, though why she cannot tell.

"Ah, I thought so!" is Edith's calm rejoinder. "I am glad to have seen it—I wondered what sort of a thing he would get for me. That locket was bought for me, Juliet."

"For you! How?" Juliet asks in amazement, and grasping it more tightly still, as though she expected Edith to demand it of her then and there.

"You seem quite fond of it," retorts her cousin, laughing. "Is it because he gave it to you? Why, Juliet, I do believe you are in love with him!"—as Juliet's face becomes crimson.

"No, I am not," is on the tip of her tongue, but she remembers her husband's caution, and restrains herself in time. "Well, should I not be?" she answers lightly. "But what were you saying about my locket?"

"Why, it was intended for me in the first place. He went to Ford's to get it, and, not seeing anything to his taste, ordered one to be made. Directly after there was the fire at Ford's, as you know, and, besides losing most of his jewelry and things, Ford himself was injured. Then Sir Evelyn got me a bracelet from London, and asked me if I minded waiting for the locket, as he did not wish to deprive Ford of the order. Of course I could not say a word, but I was so vexed, Juliet—wouldn't you have been? I think it was very inconsiderate of him, and you see, Juliet, if that locket had been made at the proper time, I should have had it long before my marriage, instead of which, I suppose it has just been sent from Ford's, and so he has given it to you."

"But you would have had to return it to him now, I suppose?" says Juliet. Her hands are lying listlessly in her lap, while the locket rises and falls unheeded on her breast. She cares for it no longer, it seems to her that she has no right to it.

"Oh, I don't suppose I should!" returns Edith. "I haven't given him back any of his presents yet—of course I had no opportunity—but I must say something about them now, and he will be sure to tell me to keep them. It won't matter to you, Juliet; he has plenty of money, and will give you a lot more things—and I shan't get much in that way now, it isn't as if Randal were the eldest son."

Juliet has something to say to her husband that night after they have returned home; she lingers in the dining-room, fidgeting first with one thing and then another, much to his surprise, for she generally avoids him.

At last she comes to his side as he sits looking over a newspaper that has arrived during their absence, and he sees that she holds in her hand the locket and chain which he gave her a few hours before.

"Sir Evelyn," she says, "may I say a word to you about this?"

"It is not worth wasting any more thought about, is it, Juliet?" he replies coldly.

"I think it is—if you will hear me."

"Certainly."

"Edith was telling me this evening," she begins falteringly—too young and inexperienced to know what a serious mistake she is making—"about this locket, and how it was intended for her at first. She admires it so greatly, and always wished for it so much after she knew it was ordered for her—I could see she wanted it this evening, and she will not get many pretty things now, as Randal isn't rich. She is going to return you your presents that you gave her before her marriage, but I know you will not take them back, and I thought perhaps you would let me—I might—you would give her this with them?"

"Give it to me," he says, putting out his hand for the locket.

She trembles at the fierce flash of his eye as he rises to his feet, and puts it hesitatingly into his outstretched hand.

He drops the locket upon the floor, and grinds his heel savagely upon it until it lies a glittering wreck beneath his foot.

Juliet looks from it to him in amazement.

"You hateful man!" she exclaims at last, and then rushes out of the room and runs up-stairs.

CHAPTER VII.

EDITH and her husband stay only one night at Compton Cheney; the next day they depart for Chalvington, about fifteen miles distant.

Juliet breathes freely again, and feels thankful to be left in peace, if only for a little while. Already she has ceased to take pleasure in the intercourse which she used to enjoy so much; she dreaded every question, and started in fear whenever she pronounced Sir Evelyn's name.

She gets through the meeting with her relations very well; the Colonel tells them as much as he chooses—how much, she does not know, nor does she care.

None of them express extreme surprise, and a few venture to congratulate her laughingly on the success of the plot, which congratulations she accepts in the same mirthful spirit as that in which they are offered.

She feels pretty safe, knowing that Edith has been strictly forbidden by the Colonel to enlighten any one by so much as a word, on pain of his severest displeasure; and so the excitement gradually passes off, and after a little wonder and conjecture among themselves, the numerous relatives begin to forget that the two marriages were ever arranged in any other way.

After Lovelace's ebullition of rage and her outspoken opinion of him, the gulf between them widens perceptibly—not in public—there he shows her every attention, and, according to his command, she never shrinks from him or from the mention of his name; but in private they scarcely ever see each other save at meal-times, when she sits at the head of the long table and he at the foot, and have the privilege of gazing at one another during the time that the meal lasts, after which they separate until the next.

They give dinner-parties sometimes, and amongst the other guests come Edith and Randal; and Juliet watches her cousin with Lovelace, wondering with a half-regretful wonder if he really loved her when she took him away from her.

She sometimes meets Aubrey St. John, but as a rule he shuns her society when possible.

He seems to have grown years older during the last few months; his boyish brow is grave now, and his gray eyes are sad as well as earnest; but he takes his reverses in very manly fashion, and, in truth, they have made a man of him.

The spring passes away and the summer comes. In the quiet country village there is little change beyond a few garden-parties and school-treats.

Colonel St. John and his kinsman are as much together as ever they were, and, though all question of joining the estates is of course at an end, they each take as deep an interest in the other's property as though such a junction were still in contemplation.

They are about the two places together nearly the whole day long, while Juliet sits indoors, pining a little, and growing pale.

She does not care to go out, she does not care for anything, not even to go and stay with Edith, who frequently begs the favor of her company at the Elms for a time.

"Juliet, my dear," says her uncle, raising her face for inspection, as she stands at his side one morning, when he has ridden over to Tenham, "you don't look half so well as you used, and it strikes me you've been moping lately. Now what's the matter with you?"

"Nothing, uncle, indeed. I am quite well," she answers; but the tears come into her eyes under his keen gaze.

"I never knew you mope for nothing," he persists; "and I've seen a very great change in you lately."

"There is nothing the matter," she tells him again decidedly.

"I'll tell you what," he continues presently—"you've got a fine disinterested husband."

"Why—what do you mean, uncle?"

"I mean that he's having all your money settled upon yourself, and some of his own with it too. Now don't look like that over it, Juliet, and don't talk any nonsense to me. He's a downright generous man, and to whom is he to be generous if not to his wife?"

"I don't want it—I don't want it!" she interrupts passionately. "I would rather be poor—I would rather earn my own living!"

"Pray may I ask why?"

"Don't you see, uncle, I took Edith and her property away from him——"

"Her property! You mean mine, I suppose?"

"He was to have Compton with her, wasn't he?"

"Not until my death—and now I don't know that it will ever go to her. I can leave it to whom I chose; and she has disobeyed me——"

But Juliet smiles in his face, so little distrustful is she of her uncle's stern sense of justice, and latent, but strong, affection for his daughter.

"Who is talking nonsense now, uncle Phil?" she demands.

"Juliet, I'm afraid that husband of yours hasn't yet succeeded in teaching you due subjection to your elders. Ah, well"—with a quaint conceit that brings a laugh to the lips which sometimes do not smile for days together now—"it isn't to be expected that he would succeed where I failed! Are you a good wife to him, and do you do as he tells you?" he asks suddenly.

Juliet blushes to think how impatiently she has borne the yoke which she herself laid upon her shoulders.

"Now and then, uncle Phil—when it suits me," she answers, trying to speak gaily.

"Ah! And now tell me, Lady Lovelace, what objection you have to the arrangements which he is making for your benefit?"

"Well, as I began to tell you, uncle, if Edith had married him, he would have had Compton Cheney at some time, would he not?"

"Humph! I suppose so."

"And now he has not only lost her and the property, but he has got me, with only my little bit of money. Don't you see that when it was I who cheated him out of all the other, I don't like to take anything from him. I would rather give him every penny I have."

"That isn't the feeling a wife should have towards her husband, Juliet."

"Uncle, that is different. We did not mean to marry each other."

She turns away from him as she says this, resting one hand upon the table, while her grave blue eyes gaze out through the window into the garden, gay with summer flowers.

He looks long and thoughtfully at so much of her face as he can see, and it is some time before he speaks again.

"There is another way of looking at it," he resumes presently. "Suppose that all his property were swept away by some failure or accident, you could give him a home then, Juliet—you could open your doors wide to him, or, if you preferred it, you could yield up all your money to his creditors, and so, perhaps, tide him over his misfortunes. You could do that, Juliet, and, if I understand anything of your character, I believe you would glory in such an act."

"He would not allow it, uncle—he would not use a penny that he considered belonged to me."

She speaks bitterly in her impatience and growing weariness of her lonely life, which may never be brightened with love.

"Yes, he would, Juliet, if you asked him

to, as—well, as you ask me to do anything you want done."

"But I love you, uncle!" she cries.

"Juliet, if there is a man on earth worthy of a woman's best love, that man is Evelyn Lovelace. Now don't say a word about this, I was not to mention it, but I had a mind you should know how much he was thinking of you. Give me a kiss, and let me be off."

He is gone in another minute, and Juliet is left alone to meditate over his communications.

At first she thinks that, in spite of her uncle's caution, she will go to her husband and tell him she cannot accept his generosity, but presently, when she begins to consider what manner of man he is, and to what conclusion their last argument came, she cannot make up her mind to speak to him on the subject, and finally decides to let it drift until a favorable opportunity occurs.

So the time passes on until Christmas is near, and one morning during breakfast Lovelace informs her that his cousin and only remaining relative on his father's side, Lady Thorncroft, and her husband, Sir Edgar Thorncroft, are coming to spend Christmas week at Tenham.

"They have two boys," he adds. "Will it inconvenience you if they bring them with them?"

"Oh, no; I shall like that! It will seem like being at uncle Howard's again, to have some boys about me."

"Have you been wishing to visit Oaklands, then? I hope you did not think I could object to your going there, or to any of your relatives' houses. You are quite at liberty—as I hope you know."

"It was not that. I did not seem to care about going anywhere—I suppose I am lazy, for it seems easier to stay at home."

"Your uncle tells me you've been moplish lately, Juliet. If you don't recover your spirits soon, I shall send you to Italy with my cousin, to try what change of air will do. They are starting in January, I believe."

"I won't go," she answers, the old quick color starting into her face at his quiet words of authority.

"And, pray, what is your objection?"

"If I go anywhere, it shall be to my own relations, whom I love—not to strangers, who care no more for me than I do for them!" she says passionately.

"Ah! You are a bright example of devotion to relations," he rejoins coolly, helping himself to some game-pie as he speaks. "Another cup of coffee, if you please."

Juliet, in her righteous indignation at his stinging retort, which is sufficient to pale her glowing cheek, and make the hand shake which pours out the coffee, descends to the petty revenge of giving it to him unsweetened; and he drinks it in his natural bitterness, because he guesses she has done it on purpose, and he will not appear to notice the omission.

"Is there any one whom you wish to have here for Christmas?" he resumes presently.

"No, unless——"

She pauses, remembering what Edith had said about his not caring to see much of her yet awhile.

"Don't hesitate about asking the Blakeys, if you want them," he says. "It will make no difference to me."

"It isn't that I want them so much," she answers, rather wistfully, "only we have never yet asked them here."

"You might have had them at any time. I should have thought you would know that."

"I did think you would have refused. But I have not cared much about it, and Edith—— Perhaps they will go to uncle Phil's."

"Your uncle's house will be quite full enough without them," he says drily. "It would only be a charity to take some of them off his hands."

"Then perhaps they had better come—unless they are already engaged elsewhere. I will write and ask them today."

Edith answers her letter almost immediately, accepting her invitation with alacrity.

She tells Juliet that Randal rather wished to spend Christmas at his parents' house, but of course she could not hear of being absent from the annual gathering of the St. Johns at the house of the head of the family, and equally of course Randal must come with her; it would never do to spend their first married Christmas apart.

So in due time they arrive, also the Thorncrofts and their two sturdy boys, who immediately fall violently in love with their pretty young hostess.

Lady Thorncroft is a good deal older than herself, nearly as old as Sir Evelyn, Juliet decides, looking at the rather faded complexion and the decided lines in the brow. She is not at all like him however, either in manner or appearance.

She and Juliet get on very well together; and, indeed, Juliet is very glad of her presence to shield her from Edith, who pronounces Lady Thorncroft "a bore," and declares the noise of her two boys and of the merry party which frequently descends upon them from Compton altogether too much for her delicate nerves; but, of her six visitors, Juliet loves little Edgar and Harry the best, and they love her in return with all the warmth of their boyish hearts.

Sometimes her husband enters the room, to find the three bending over some puzzle or other amusement, an arm of each of the boys thrown round her neck, and her own face glowing as brightly as theirs in the interest of the game.

When such a scene greets his eyes, he always turns, and walks straight out again.

After morning service on Christmas Day, the two impatient boys are sent off at once to join the party at Compton, whither the rest proceed later in the day, to swell the grand dinner-party at which the elders assemble.

On Boxing Day they go over again, but not until after dinner, for on this evening the youngsters are in the ascendency, and dinner, instead of being a long stately meal, as it was the day before, is merely a troublesome ceremony to be got over and out of the way as soon as possible.

Juliet is, as she was the year previous, a shining light in the circle of merry children together that evening; but, though she amuses them in many ways, it certainly is not she who proposes a game of forfeits.

However the proposal is seconded and carried unanimously, and the game forthwith begun, Juliet, as before, sitting with the forfeits in her lap; but it is not Cecily who cries them this time.

Little Sidney St. John, a year older and wiser than he was last Christmas, when he managed to extract Lovelace's bunch of keys from his pocket, clamors for the office of crier; and, as nobody objects, he goes down upon his knees before Juliet, and for the next quarter of an hour there is nothing to be heard but shouts of laughter at the strange antics which he compels his victims to play.

But at last, as Juliet holds above his head a silver fusee-box, with the usual "Here's a very pretty thing," etc., he repeats the commonplace old-fashioned phrase that fell so oddly upon the ears of Lovelace last year.

"'Bow to the wittiest, kneel to the prettiest, and kiss the one you love best,'" he says quickly, and then jumps up. "Sir Evelyn's!" he exclaims.

"Sir Evelyn's! He is not playing, is he?" Juliet asks, almost in the same words as she put that very question a year ago.

"Yes, he is," the boy returns, "and I didn't steal it at all this time, Juliet. He gave it to me his very own self."

"How strange!" she thinks, while Edith is saying the same thing to Lovelace, smiling up at him as he stands beside her low chair, his proud dark face and sombre evening-dress forming a strong contrast to her dazzlingly fair beauty and toilet of pale green and white.

"How strange that forfeit should come to you again!" she remarks sweetly. "If I remember rightly, you had the very same one last Christmas, when——"

She stops significantly, with downcast eyes; and he replies, with one of his stiff bows, though he looks by no means displeased—

"I believe I had. These coincidences do occur now and then. I am coming, Sidney."

He crosses the room at the boy's impatient call, while Edith raises her head, and fans herself with a self-conscious air.

Last year he knelt at her feet, and proclaimed her his ideal of beauty. This year there is no fresh rival on the scene.

"Queer, isn't it?" says Randal in an undertone. "It seems as if he were to have the forfeit. I remember he came and knelt before you for the 'prettiest' last Christmas, Edie, and I was half mad with jealousy; but he showed good taste, I'm not going to deny that."

With a gratified little blush, she looks down the room at the stalwart dark figure, pausing for a moment beside the small boy; and then she hears him speaking in deep grave tones.

"All right, Sid; I know what I have to do. 'Bow to the wittiest——'"

As before, he makes Juliet a profound obeisance, which she is light-hearted enough at this merry moment to acknowledge with a curtsey and a ripple of laughter.

"'Kneel to the prettiest——'"

He bends, not upon one, but upon both knees before her, while she looks at him in amazement, blushing scarlet.

He then rises to his feet in silence, and stoops and kisses her cheek; it is the first time he has ever kissed her.

She sits now speechless, the face that was so rosy suddenly pale, her heart beating so fast that she is fain to press one hand upon it to try to still its wild throbbings.

He walks quietly back to where he stood before; his grave dignity perfectly unruffled, not a muscle of his haughty mouth relaxed, no sign of any feeling, tender or humorous, betraying itself on his stern countenance.

But the children are well pleased with this threefold compliment to their favorite, and their shouts of applause are long and loud, while the hero of the moment stands grave and silent in his place near Edith, who is looking a little injured and uneasy; and the Colonel takes his hand, unnoticed by any one else, and presses it very warmly.

"He did not mean it," Juliet says to herself, again and again. "He only did it to prevent people from guessing how little he really does love me."

Late in the evening, after the little guests living in the neighborhood have gone home and the children in the house are going to bed, Juliet is startled by a pull at her dress, and, looking down, she sees young Sidney at her side.

"Cousin Juliet, I want to tell you something," he whispers. "They sent me to bed, but I slipped downstairs again. Look here, I know you thought I stole that fusee-box out of Sir Evelyn's pocket, as I did the keys last year; but I didn't—really. He was in the hall this evening, and called me out of the dining-room, and told me that, if I would manage to get 'forfeits' played, and give him the same one that he had before, he would tip me a sovereign; and, see—here it is!" displaying it gleefully in his hand. "He gave me the box himself for his forfeit, and I had to cheat a little. I looked to see what was in your lap, and, when his box was gone, I cried the one he told me. You see, I didn't steal it, Juliet."

Juliet is by no means in a state of mind to administer reproof or correction. She only presses a hearty kiss upon the small shrewd face, and replies:

"I believe you, darling;" and the boy disappears with a hurried "Good-night."

CHAPTER VIII.

WHEN the Christmas festivities are over, and the Christmas guests have departed, Juliet and her husband go on in much the same way as they have done in the past; and the sudden new hope that sprang up in her heart on the night of the children's party is fading fast for lack of something to sustain it.

Lovelace is just as cold and impenetrable as ever; so surely as he speaks a kind or friendly word to her he follows it up with some biting sarcasm, the bitterness of which she only knows, and which goes further to turn her heart from him than neglect or even cruelty would do.

But she turns a brave face to the world, and not even the old Colonel guesses what she suffers.

Early in March comes the news of the birth of a son to Edith and Randal, followed, before the child is three weeks old, by another piece of intelligence by no means so agreeable.

Randal's regiment receives orders for Africa, and they are to sail in a fortnight.

Edith is kept in ignorance until it is no longer possible to conceal the truth from her; but when at last, in the tenderest and most careful way, she is informed of it, her lamentations know no bounds.

She declares that Randal will certainly be killed in the first skirmish, that she will be left a widow and her child fatherless.

"Am I not the most unfortunate of women?" is her tragic greeting when Juliet comes to see her. "Was any one ever left as I am, so weak and delicate, with a young infant on my hands, while my husband goes far away to shed his blood for those who care nothing for him?"

"Many a one, dear, and worse than that," says Juliet, kissing her, and thinking of her own loveless home. "You are gaining strength rapidly, darling, and, please Heaven, Randal will soon be at your side again, safe and well!"

"It's all very well to talk," Edith returns peevishly; "but think of my loneliness, and of what I shall endure during his absence, following every movement of his regiment in the papers—looking down the list of killed and wounded for his name"—with a shudder.

"I wouldn't think of that, dear—we will pray Heaven it may never come to pass. Think of your dear little boy, Edie—you have him to comfort you."

"He's a pretty child, isn't he?" returns Edith, looking with some show of motherly pride at the fair little sleeping face, while Juliet strokes the soft hair and bends to kiss the downy little cheek. "He is considered more like me than Randal," she continues; "but I don't know—we both have blue eyes, and old Mrs. Blakey tells me that all her children were pretty as babies. Well, Juliet, do you know this house is to be given up? I could not stay here all alone—I should go out of my mind."

"Where are you going, then? To Mrs. Blakey's?"

"I suppose so—for a time, at any rate."

"Would you like to come to Tenham, Edith? We shall be very pleased if you will pay us a visit."

"Oh, I should like it very much!"—with a brightening face. "But——"

"My husband will be pleased if you will come; we were speaking of it only this morning; you need have no hesitation on that point."

"Oh, that is all right, then! Well, I think I must go to Mrs. Blakey's first for a few weeks, because she has already asked me, and I accepted, not knowing I should have any more welcome invitation; but I will come to you as soon as ever I can manage to get away."

In a few days more Randal is gone, and Edith has taken up her abode for the time being at his father's house, whence she writes frequent and very doleful epistles to Juliet, bewailing Randal's absence, her own loneliness, and the dulness of the house. But one day she concludes thus—

"I have been here more than two months, and now I think I may tell Mrs. Blakey that I am coming to you next week. She cannot be offended after all this time, and I am sure my patience has been angelic. Besides, she knows what great friends we are, and very likely is wondering that I do not want to pay you a visit. Shall we say about next Tuesday? Baby is very well, and I have got a capital nurse for him—a really competent person, who can take the care of him altogether off my hands, so that you and I will have plenty of opportunity for long gossips like we used to have."

"I hope you will recover your spirits now that you are going to have some one to cheer you up," Sir Evelyn remarks when Juliet tells him the news.

"I am quite well, thank you."

"You don't look so. I wish now that I had sent you to Italy with my cousin, but just then you were looking so much better that I thought it unnecessary."

"I told you some time before that I did not wish to go."

"Yes—I believe you expressed your opinions very plainly; but they would have made no difference to me had I thought your health required the change."

"They would have made this difference," she answers, turning upon him suddenly—"that I should not have gone!"

"If you answer me like that again, Juliet, I'll send you to-morrow, I could easily manage that," he rejoined.

"Edith could not come here then," she says defiantly.

"Well, I should not break my heart about that."

She goes away then, a little comforted by his last speech.

* * * * * * *

"Well, Juliet, I am sure you ought to be a very happy girl; you have a beautiful home here."

The two cousins are sitting in the drawing-room when Edith makes this remark. It is August now, and the soft breeze waits, the lace window-curtains gently to and fro, and from the cloudless blue sky the summer sun is shining down upon the fair undulating park and pasture-lands of Tenham.

"Yes, it is a beautiful place," assents Juliet.

"Sir Evelyn is a good deal richer than father, any one can see that. But I don't believe you half appreciate it, not as I should, at any rate."

"Why, what makes you think that?" Juliet asks, smiling, but in the depth of her heart a little fearful. She has not much peace now Edith is here—there never passes a day but that she makes some attempt to pry into her domestic concerns, and the questions which she allows herself to ask are often very painful to bear with as well as hard to answer. She even goes so far as to hint occasionally that Juliet and her husband are not happy together; but Juliet will never gratify her curiosity upon that or any other point, when she can possibly avoid it.

"You never wear that locket Sir Evelyn gave you," continues Edith, without answering her cousin's question. "How is that? Don't you like it because it was intended for me in the first instance?"—with a little laugh that may mean anything or nothing.

"It is broken," Juliet tells her very shortly.

"Broken! How careless you must have been. What did he say?"

"Nothing. You know he is not a talkative man. Let me have baby down, shall we, Edith?"—rising and going to the bell.

"Not unless you are prepared to hold him," answers the other, with a half-smothered yawn. "I am quite tired out with our drive this morning. But, really, Sir Evelyn is a great deal nicer than I ever thought he could be. I did not know I was in the least tired until I reached home."

"I am glad you think him improved," says Juliet gaily; but her heart is full of passionate pain and regret.

Each day as it passes shows her that her husband is not necessarily cold and sarcastic to all as he is to her—that he can be attentive to Edith's wants—almost gentle with her weakness.

She has been at Tenham three months now, and she and Sir Evelyn seem to grow better friends every day; neither of them shows signs of wearying of the other's society, and he stays at home more than he ever did before, while Edith's brightest looks are all reserved for him. Juliet sits brooding over these things, and she begins bitterly to rue the day when she interfered between them, as she thought, for Edith's happiness.

Before Edith has time to say anything more the nurse brings in the child, and leaves him with them; and directly afterwards the door opens again, and Lovelace enters the room.

"I just came in to tell you, Juliet," he says, "that your cousin, Aubrey St. John, is here. I found him at Compton, where he had arrived this morning, not knowing the Colonel was away, so I asked him up here instead. He will stay here to-night, and perhaps for a few days."

"You should not have done that," says Edith, with a laugh.

"Why not?" demands Juliet, resenting her cousin's interference.

"Yes—why not?" repeats Lovelace looking at his wife, though addressing Edith.

"Oh, don't you know why not?" she answers, still laughing coquettishly. "Don't you know that Aubrey was terribly in love with Juliet before she was married—poor boy? I don't expect he will care about coming here to see her now that she is Lady Lovelace. Did Juliet never tell you? Then perhaps I ought not to have mentioned it."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A MAN applied for a pension at the Maine State Agency in Augusta the other day, and being asked on what ground he thought himself entitled to a pension, answered: "Drunkenness." The astonished pension agent told him that pensions are only granted for disability contracted in the army. "I know that," said the applicant. "Drunkenness is my disability, and I contracted it in the army."

THOUGHT and theory must precede all action that moves to salutary purposes. Yet action is nobler in itself than either thought or theory.

OUR MEETING.

BY WM. W. LORD.

We met, in spirit, never to part again:
Met, and were blind—nor thought
Of hopes that hope not thro' future years—
All to each—yet to each nought.

Fate hath avenged himself, and laughs
At this, the saddest thing he ever did—
Knowing our lips are chained to silence,
And we dare not lift the heart's closed lid.

WITHIN A WEEK.

BY GEORGIANA FULLERTON.

CHAPTER I.

"HERE you are, Maude. This is the Wallington fast train. Got your ticket all right?"

And, without giving her time to reply, Gerald Douglas hurried his sister into a first-class car, as if there were not a moment to be lost; and, having arranged her impediments in the rack, he sprang out again, and stood leaning against the door.

"Are you quite sure my luggage is all right, Gerald?"

"Perfectly certain, for I saw it labelled. Look, there are your precious boxes going into the van now. I admit your anxiety is natural, for it would be a sell if you arrived at Whitworth Court and those smart frocks you have been so busy about for the last month were left behind. What would you do, Maude, eh?"

"Telegraph to the station-master here, I suppose."

"I'm glad to see you've got your wits about you, though this is the first journey you have taken alone. To think of your traveling in a first-class car too, your luxurious puss! Quite the swell to-day, I declare!"

"Gerald, you tease, be quiet. I half wish now that I was going back with you, that I do."

"Oh, I know you don't!"

"Well, anyhow, I wish you were coming with me, for then I should not feel half so shy."

"Bosh! you'll be all right after the first hour or two. There's the whistle, and off you go. I hope I shall have just such a week. Good-bye."

"Give them my love," called Maude, gazing rather ruefully after her brother's tall form, as the train moved rapidly away from the down platform of the Oxford Station. "Dear old Gerald! Anyhow, his first year at College hasn't spoilt him, though he is so clever."

She spoke her thoughts aloud, then blushed, as, settling herself into the corner, she quickly perceived that she was not alone.

Opposite her sat a stout, elderly gentleman, who, overcome by the unusual height of the temperature, had sunk into the arms of Morpheus, and was totally oblivious to his surroundings.

His companion, whom Maude rightly conjectured to be his wife, was of rather larger proportions.

With one hand she feebly waved to and fro a large red fan, while the amply-filled luncheon basket, which lay open beside her, and the contents of which were rapidly disappearing, showed that, in spite of the overwhelming heat, she was still capable of doing full justice to the goods which the gods provided.

"Any relation, I wonder?" was Maude's inward comment, as she cast a hasty glance upon the young man, who, in one of the extremest corners of the car, was diligently perusing a sporting paper. "No, certainly not; quite a different stamp, I should say, though I can't see a bit what his face is like because of that tiresome paper. Oh, dear, how provoking!" she murmured, almost aloud, as a monthly magazine which she had drawn from her bag, slipped out of her hand on to the floor.

"Don't trouble, or the bag will go over too," and the reader of the sporting paper leant forward, picked up the offending periodical, and restored it to her.

Maude blushed slightly, at which Sir Victor Corbet, the reader of the sporting paper, smiled, and then, as if overcome by the effort, he sank again into his comfortable corner.

Sir Victor was six feet one in height he was of strong build, with broad shoulders and upright figure, which had received its full development from the manly sports he had been accustomed to indulge in since boyhood.

His deep-set, honest gray eyes looked out under a pair of well-defined eyebrows; his hair was almost black, and curled thickly over his head; and when we add that both nose and mouth were well-shaped, and that his upper lip was adorned with a black moustache, it will be recognised that that this young Baronet was by no means unprepossessing in appearance.

As a matter of fact, most women raved about him, and even men were heard to allow that "he was an uncommonly good-looking fellow, you know;" while his sportsmanlike qualities and equable temper made him most popular among his numerous friends and acquaintances.

Owing to his father's sudden death in the hunting field during his minority, Sir Victor, on his coming of age, found himself the possessor of a fine property in Blackingtonshire and a rent-roll of eighteen hundred a year.

His mother had brought him up most carefully, but she had died about fourteen months previously, with only one desire, as far as her son was concerned, left ungratified—namely, that he had not made it possible for her to know his wife, for though he had now attained the age of eight-and-twenty, the young Baronet was still unmarried.

Educated at Eton and Oxford, Sir Victor had by his own express wish entered the Army through that University, as the idea of having no settled profession was extremely distasteful to him.

His mother would have liked him to have been in the Guards, but he preferred one of the crack Cavalry regiments, and threw himself heart and soul into his soldier's life, as he did into everything which he undertook.

It was quite a sorrow to him when, shortly after his mother's death, he sent in his resignation, feeling that it behooved him now to keep up a settled residence in his ancestral home, and look after affairs which hitherto he had left pretty much in her hands.

"All for Wallington?" exclaimed the guard, as the train slackened speed and drew up at Marahley.

"Yes, Wallington," iaconically replied Sir Victor, apparently answering for the whole party.

"It's at Evesford, we must get out, my dear," mildly interposed the stout gentleman, who had suddenly awakened.

"Evesford, Sir, next station," sharply remarked the guard, banging the door to; and again the train proceeded on its way, and after depositing a variety of passengers at Evesford, among whom were Sir Victor's and Maude's partly traveling companions, was once more set in motion.

As Wallington was neared, and the Malvern Hills came in sight, the softness and variety of their coloring drew forth an audible exclamation of delight from the girl who had as yet seen very little beyond her own immediate surroundings.

"They are pretty, are they not?" said Sir Victor, putting down his paper; "and do you see that town lying at the foot of the hill?"

"Yes; what is the name of it?"

"That is Malvern. Have you ever been there?"

"No, never. I have hardly been anywhere yet," answered the girl, simply.

"Really? Well, if you are going to stay near Wallingford, you ought to try and spend a day at Malvern, and climb to the top of the Beacon. Such a lovely view you get from there."

"Have you been up it?" asked Maude with interest.

"Yes, often. My mother and sisters spent a winter at Malvern once, but that was some time ago, when I was at Oxford."

"Were you ever at Oxford? Dear old place, I do love it," she exclaimed, enthusiastically.

Then added, with a touch of sisterly pride, "My eldest brother is there."

"Was that your brother who came to see you off?" inquired Sir Victor.

"Yes. He was at Winchester, and took a scholarship for New College. Which was your College?"

"I was at the House?"

"I know enough of Oxford to understand what you mean," replied Maude, with a merry laugh. "Christ Church."

"Quite right. But tell me, are you going into Wallingtonshire for this Jubilee week?"

"Yes. I hope I shall enjoy it, but I don't feel quite sure. I have never stayed away by myself before."

She made the admission with a candor which was absolutely charming.

"Will you be at the Jubilee ball? It is to come off next Tuesday."

"If Mrs. Whitworth goes (I am going to stay with the Whitworths at Whitworth Court), I shall be there. But I fear she won't be able to go."

"Why not?" asked Sir Victor.

"Because she lost an uncle of whom she was very fond not quite three weeks ago, so there will be no party in the house; but she begged me to come all the same, if I did not mind being alone with her and Colonel Whitworth. Here we are already close to another large station. Is this ours?" looking inquiringly at her traveling companion.

"Yes, Wallington sure enough," he replied. "Let me get those down for you," as she stood up to reach her things out of the rack. Then he courteously added, "Can I help you with your heavy luggage?"

"No, thank you. Mrs. Whitworth said she should meet me. I can easily find the carriage. Please don't trouble any further;" and having rapidly delivered herself of this little speech, Maude hurried away, with some misgivings as to whether she had not been rather forward to talk so much to a perfect stranger.

Sir Victor lifted his hat in acknowledgment of the girl's parting bow, and stood looking after the slight, erect figure.

"What a sweet face!" he exclaimed, slowly to himself. "Why, she's worth a dozen of any of the girls I met this season in town;" with which decision of the Baronet's I think it is doubtful whether those same young ladies would have agreed.

"Well, my dear, here you really are," cried a cheery voice at her elbow, as Maude stood confused amid the uproar. "Now, just point out your trunks to James, and he'll soon find a porter to bring them to the brougham. Isn't it hot? You must be melting. I never knew such a summer in my life; it is really quite tropical, but delightful all the same. Those your boxes? That's right. Then we need not wait here any longer. Such a crowd, isn't there? Really one can hardly move," and Mrs. Whitworth bustled away, followed by Maude.

"There, dear, get in; it is rather cooler than the station, anyhow," as they reached the carriage.

Then, as soon as they were seated, Mrs. Whitworth rattled on again.

"You are looking charming, my dear child; simply charming. It is nice having got you after all; but I hope you won't find the house wofully dull. So unfortunate, you know, my dear, uncle's death, for I had planned such a delightful party for this week; but there, we must make it out as best we can. Ready, James? Are you quite sure you have got all Miss Douglas's luggage? Home, then. My dear," as the car moved away, and Sir Victor at that moment appeared in the station doorway, "who is that very distinguished looking young man? But how stupid of me. Of course you don't know."

"He was traveling in the same car with me. He seemed very pleasant."

"You don't say so. Could you not see the initials on his bag or portmanteau? Were you talking to him?"

"I dropped my book, and he picked it up for me; and later on he told me a little about Malvern," answered Maude, blushing again.

"Did he say where he was going to stay? I hope he is to be in the neighborhood for this gay week."

"I don't remember. We talked more about Oxford, I think."

"My dear, you possess very little curiosity. I simply couldn't have rested until I had found out a great deal more. You traveled first-class, of course? I told your father when I sent my invitation that this was to be my treat to you from beginning to end."

"It is so good of you," murmured Maude, taking the hand of her kind friend in hers.

Mrs. Whitworth embraced her tenderly, saying at the same time:

"My dear, if you enjoy yourself, I shall be amply repaid. And now," she continued, "I must tell you a little about the gaieties in prospect. First of all, we go to-morrow to one of the finest places in the neighborhood, a garden party, which Lady Blankeney is giving in honor of some Indian notabilities. On Saturday I have planned a long day in Wallington for you to see the Cathedral and porcelain works, besides looking on at some cricket and polo; and next week there are just heaps of things to be done."

"Isn't there a ball somewhere on Tuesday?" asked Maude.

"Yes. Now, I should like to know who told you that?"

Then, without waiting for a reply, Mrs. Whitworth ran on, "I am determined you shall go to the ball, though my taking you now is out of the question, of course. I am doing all I can to persuade Colonel Whitworth to act as your chaperon, but he isn't to be depended upon, being such a sufferer from that horrid Indian fever, poor dear man, and he hates dancing, too. Still, he'll have to go, unless I can put you in charge of one of my lady friends; fortunately he is very obedient when I insist. When you marry, my dear Maude, you must begin at once to keep your husband in order; it is quite the best plan, I assure you. But there, you know nothing about that at present. Now we haven't much farther to go, I am thankful to say, for you must be quite weary of this long drive. I really do wish Whitworth Court were nearer a station."

But Maude deprecated any idea of fatigue saying—

"I do not think anyone could get tired driving through such a lovely country. I had no idea Wallingtonshire was so pretty, and what quantities of orchards and fruit trees there are!"

"Yes, they are most picturesque," replied the elder lady. "Your next visit to me must be in the spring, for really the blossom is quite a sight; one hardly knows which to admire most, that or the autumn, when the trees are laden with ripe red apples and purple-hued plums."

"Oxfordshire will seem very flat after this scenery. It never occurred to me before that it is far from being a pretty county."

"It is your first visit to Wallingtonshire, I suppose, Maude?"

"Yes; and when I was staying with my aunt last winter, and met you, it was the first time I had ever been in London."

"Your aunt is a charming woman," remarked Mrs. Whitworth, cordially. "We were the greatest friends in India. Ah, what merry days those were we had at Simla together!"

"I suppose you have not seen Aunt Ellen since Uncle George's death?"

"No, indeed. We were still at Simla, though the regiment was on the point of leaving for Rawul Pindi, when Henry received the telegram announcing his cousin's sudden death from heart disease. Of course, he sent in his resignation at once, and we came off as soon as possible. Who was going to remain out there, when Whitworth Court and 25000 a year were awaiting us here? But that all happened six years ago now. Your aunt and I however continued to correspond, and when I ran up to town for a few days last December, I went to see her on her return from India. Dear me, what changes one sees in this world of ours."

"And how are your two boys getting on?"

"Capitally, and like their school so much. Another ten days and we shall have them home. I want you to see them, for the photos I showed your aunt in the winter don't nearly do them justice. How many brothers and sisters have you, Maude?"

"I have four sisters and four brothers."

"My goodness! what a party, and you are the second?"

"Yes, I come next to Gerald; all the others are younger."

"And has your father had the living of Ipsley long?"

"Yes, for the last ten years. Before that we lived in the North."

"It is near Oxford, is it not?"

"Not far, between four and five miles, I believe."

"Then, of course, you go in for the gaieties there?"

"Sometimes. This year we had great fun," replied the girl, brightly; "for mother took me to two of the Commemoration balls, and we also went to the flower show in St. John's Gardens, and the fete at Worcester College."

"And did you enjoy it all?"

"More than I can say. And then Gerald being with us made it so delightful. I wish you knew Gerald; he drove me to the station to-day, and saw me off."

"He is at New College, your aunt told me I remember, and very clever. Well, he must bring you all the way the next time you come to us, Maude. But here we are actually in the drive at last."

It was a long and pretty approach to the house, down a steep hill first, then along a level piece of road, bounded on one hand by park-like pastures, on the other by a precipitous descent thick with wild ferns and brambles, at the verge of which wound a sparkling river; and beyond were green meadows and a large wood, with a small church nestling among its trees.

A sharp turn brought them within view of the house, a white building, only two stories high, nearly covered with purple clematis, in front of which stretched a wide expanse of lawn, leading to an ornamental piece of water, where two swans were sailing majestically along.

In the distance rose the Ankerdyne, a hill of some height, bare and treeless, but not without a certain beauty in its rugged wildness.

"A perfect summer place this, my dear child," said Mrs. Whitworth, answering her guest's look of delight; "but it is dreadfully damp in the winter, so as soon as the boys are safe back at school, I get my husband off abroad. It is far better for him, and less triste for us both. I assure you, a little of Whitworth in the winter goes a long way, and the Riviera makes a charming change."

Maude followed her hostess through the house and out on to the lawn, where tea was prepared, and she was duly introduced to Colonel Whitworth, who, under the shade of a beautiful tree, was reading the newspaper.

The Colonel was a tall, soldierly-looking man, with rather a sallow complexion and iron-gray hair; he was very gentlemanlike in demeanor, and exceedingly quiet in manner, a great contrast to his active, bustling wife.

"You are very late, my dear," he said slowly.

"Well, you never saw such crowds as there were at the station, so many people arriving for this festive time; and very natural too, for it isn't every year that the county celebrates the Queen's Jubilee.

"I hope you are prepared for a large amount of gaiety, Miss Douglas. My wife will give you no peace unless you go to everything; but if you are not tired out by this day week I shall be surprised."

"How ridiculous you are, Henry! You talk as if Maude were a middle-aged woman, instead of just nineteen. Youth is impervious to fatigue."

"Certainly yours was," replied her husband, smiling.

"That's an implication I won't allow," exclaimed Mrs. Whitworth, with pretended anger. "As if I were not young still. How dare you, Sir! Come, Maude, if you have finished your tea, we will leave him to himself as a punishment. I daresay you will like to see your room and get your things unpacked."

When Mrs. Whitworth returned, she laid her hand on her husband's shoulder, saying:

"Are you disappointed, or is she as pretty as I said?"

"Let me see," answered the Colonel, teasingly. "What are her good points? To begin with, she is tall and slight, her well-shaped head is properly put on, and her feet and hands are neither coarse nor large—in fact, to sum up, she is altogether a very lady-like looking girl."

"But her face? Have you nothing to say about her face?"

"Plenty; it's lucky I didn't meet her before I saw you, that's all."

"Henry, you really are most absurd. But seriously, isn't she fascinating?"

"How could she be otherwise with those liquid brown eyes and that hair, with its shades and tints? Why, artists would rave about it, and yet I could not exactly say what color it is."

"That is the beauty of it; it ranges from sunny brown to almost auburn, and her skin is so clear and white, with just a lovely touch of pink, like a maiden's blush rose."

"Yes, an exquisite complexion," replied the Colonel. "I only hope that artist fellow who stays sometimes with the Greenwoods isn't to be at Alton Hills next week, or we shall have no peace of our lives; he'll always be over here, wanting her to sit to him."

"Well, fortunately we have scarcely got a day at home, so he may spare himself the trouble. But, oh! Henry, that reminds me there was such a good-looking young fellow

came down by the train. He traveled in the same car as Maude, and got out at Wallington; and, would you believe it, actually that child, though they had some conversation together, never took the trouble to find out where he was going."

"Miss Douglas doesn't share your curiosity, my dear, that is evident," said Colonel Whitworth, laughing. "But if this Adonis is on a visit anywhere in the neighborhood, we are pretty certain to meet him to-morrow. Perhaps he is one of the Merton Castle party, or going to the Greenwoods."

"Decidedly not the Greenwoods; he didn't look like their style. Much more probably the Blankeneys. But surely that can't be the dressing-bell?"

"It is, though, and a most welcome sound. I hope you brought fish from Wallington."

"Of course I did. Well, I suppose we must go in, though it is a shame to spend any time indoors this glorious evening."

Then, linking her arm in her husband's, the Colonel and his kind-hearted, popular wife strolled slowly across the lawn together.

CHAPTER II.

THE afternoon of the following day left nothing to be desired, as far as the weather was concerned, for the party at Merton Castle.

The sun poured forth its gladdening rays from a cloudless sky, a gentle breeze stirred among the leaves from time to time, tempering the great heat, and as the car containing the Whitworths and Maude rolled along the dusty highway the rush of the broad waters of the Teme smote with a refreshing sound upon the ear.

Temptingly cool, and rich in their emerald coloring, stretched the green pastures of the Teme Valley, in which the cattle stood lazily grazing, while hardly less charming and grateful to look upon were the masses of wood which crown the precipitous heights surrounding the low-lying ground. Under the influence of the beauty of the summer's day and of the scenery around her, Maude was silent.

It was with some little trepidation, too, that she was going to this, her first large party in a strange country, for though she had been, only a short time before, to some of the Oxford galeties, it is one thing, as she felt, to go out among one's friends and neighbors, but quite another to have to face a concourse of perfect strangers.

Her shyness did not lessen as they drove up the noble approach to the Castle, a fine embattled building, which had been in Lord Blankeney's family for some 300 years; but when they emerged upon the terrace, she forgot her own feelings in the animated scene before her.

"The entire county," as Mrs. Whitworth expressed it, was at Merton Castle that afternoon; and if her guests did not enjoy themselves, they must have been hard to please, for Lady Blankeney had done her utmost to conduce to their amusement and comfort.

The Indian Princes had been previously entertained at luncheon, and were the lions of the day; a good band discoursed sweet strains with unwearied energy; fruits and iced beverages were to be found in abundance on small tables under the wide-spreading trees; boats plied to and from the lake, and were much sought after by sundry couples who had begun early in the afternoon to stroll together through the extensive and lovely grounds.

On the terraces which sloped down to the tennis-courts were to be found seats in plenty for those who had grown tired of wandering, and there it was almost entertainment enough to sit and listen to the band and watch the kaleidoscopic scene. The carpet bedding, the orchid and the fern houses, the conservatory with its wealth of tropical plants, in turn, received their due share of attention, until five o'clock drew near, when the assembled guests turned their steps and thoughts more particularly to the large bell tent in which tea was prepared.

During the earlier part of the afternoon, Colonel Whitworth had been most assiduous in escorting Maude to see all the beauties of Merton Castle, and she had now quite recovered from her shyness, and was comfortably seated with him at a small table enjoying her tea, when a tall, handsome dark girl walked into the tent, with Sir Victor Corbet by her side.

"By Jove!" exclaimed Sir Victor, "there she is again."

"What did you say?" asked Ida Vavasour, turning her head slowly, and staring at Maude.

"Nothing—only—can you tell me, who is that soldierly-looking man over there?"

"That is Colonel Whitworth."

"And the young lady?"

"I don't know; someone staying with them, I suppose. But get me some tea, Sir Victor, please; that row on the lake has made me awfully thirsty."

Sir Victor obeyed; and having supplied Miss Vavasour's wants, his eyes again wandered to the table from which Maude, at the same moment, rose to leave the tent with Colonel Whitworth.

She bowed slightly, while the color deepened in her cheeks, and he raised his hat with a smile.

"Who are you bowing to?" languidly inquired Ida Vavasour.

"I don't know," answered Sir Victor.

"You don't know! What an extraordinary idea to bow to a person you are not acquainted with! Quite a new code of manners."

"Here is your sister. She is looking for you," exclaimed Sir Victor, feeling suddenly annoyed at the whole incident, and wishing to change the conversation.

"Edith; what can she want, I wonder?"

"I have been hunting for you everywhere, Ida," cried the second Miss Vavasour, hurrying into the tent. "That tiresome Mr. Maguire Dodd has been most anxious to find you the whole afternoon, and hasn't given me a moment's peace. Now, do be kind, and take him off my hands."

"Well, exchange is no robbery, so I will give up Sir Victor to your tender mercies. But don't I see Mrs. Bosanquet over there? I must go and speak to her for a moment."

"Isn't that a pretty girl the Whitworths have brought with them this afternoon?" said Edith to Sir Victor, as her sister moved away. "She seems nice too, for I have just been talking to her. Do you know the Whitworths?"

"No, I have not that pleasure."

"Oh! then you must. They are both quite charming. You would like Miss Douglas too; she is so simple and unaffected."

Half-an-hour later, Sir Victor found himself escorting Maude about the grounds.

From the moment he had recognized her, he had made up his mind to seek a formal introduction at the earliest possible moment, and had hailed with secret delight Edith Vavasour's appearance and the desire of Mr. Maguire Dodd for her sister's society.

"How handsome the eldest Miss Vavasour is!" remarked Maude, as she and Sir Victor sauntered along together.

"Yes," he replied, "she is a very striking-looking; but I admire her sister more."

"The one called Edith, with fair hair and blue eyes? She is a great contrast to her sister."

"Pretty, though, and much pleasanter. Miss Vavasour is too cold for me. Now, the other is far easier to get on with; she is so bright and cheery too. A dear little thing altogether. It is very curious they should be so unlike, both in looks and manners."

"I must confess to being half afraid of the eldest. Her stately ways awe me," said the young girl, timidly.

"I can quite understand," answered Sir Victor, kindly; for not only is she haughty in demeanor, but is also rather given to make sarcastic remarks. Nevertheless, she commands everywhere a great deal of admiration, even in London, which is a pretty good test. That fellow who is staying with the Greenwoods is very much in love with her."

"Really!" exclaimed Maude, rather interested. "Who is he?"

"His name is Maguire Dodd. He is extremely rich; comes from Manchester, or somewhere up North. Made all his money in trade."

Then, suddenly changing his tone, Sir Victor asked abruptly:

"What are you doing to-morrow, Miss Douglas?"

"I think Mrs. Whitworth said something about our spending a long day in Wallington."

"Going to see the Cathedral, I suppose?"

"Yes, and the Porcelain Works."

"But surely you will be on the cricket ground some part of the afternoon?" was the anxious inquiry.

"Oh, dear, yes, and isn't there to be a polo match later on?"

"I believe so, on the race course. The Wallington Yeomanry versus a team from Derbyshire. Have you ever seen polo played?"

"No, never."

"At what time do you suppose you will come to the cricket match?"

"I can hardly tell, but I should think between three and four o'clock."

"Well, I shall look out for you; but there is Colonel Whitworth coming this way. How tiresome! I suppose they are going. No, you need not say good-bye yet, for I am coming to see you off."

As Sir Victor reappeared on the terrace after his farewell to the Whitworth party, he met Ida Vavasour on her way to the house.

"I hope you found the fair unknown as charming on a nearer acquaintance as you appeared to do at a distance, Sir Victor," she remarked, with a disagreeable little laugh. Then added very coldly, "Who is she?"

"Do you refer to Miss Douglas?"

"I mean the good-looking but utterly countrified girl who came with the Whitworths!"

"The great charm of Miss Douglas is her simplicity and freshness. You see, she has not yet had either of those virtues subjected too series of London seasons," was the reply, with emphasis.

"Thank you, Sir Victor; you are most complimentary, I must say," and with a toss of her head, Ida swept past him; and, having gained her room, exclaimed passionately:

"To think of his losing his heart, for even a moment, to a chit just out of a rectory schoolroom!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

"Now, Henry, if you don't let me go I'll scream. I'm going in the house. You have no business putting your arm around my waist." "What will you scream?" "I'll scream 'unhand me, villain!'" "No, you don't want to do anything like that. It wouldn't be proper." "I think it would be eminently proper." "No, you should scream 'disarm me, villain.'"

A PARSON'S FIXES

HERE is the first pastoral fix I was in, writes a well-known minister. One wintry Sunday evening I was officiating, for the first time, at a mission church in an outlying part of the parish.

The building had been a dissenting chapel. The pulpit, a formidable but rickety structure, was approached by a high and shaky flight of steps, and was illuminated by two tallow candles in tin sconces, on either side of the preacher.

I had observed some slight unsteadiness on the part of the friendly dips, and accordingly had at first moved about as little as possible.

However, as the sermon went on, caution was forgotten, and warming with my subject, I began to indulge in a little oratorical action. Reaching a climax in my discourse, I lifted both my arms, and brought them suddenly down upon the deal book-board with a sharp blow.

The result was that the dips bounced neatly out of the sconces, performed swift summersaults, and disappeared down below, among some females, if one might judge by the noises that ensued.

By the unfeigned laugh with which my exploit was received, I presume there must have been something ridiculous in the sudden ejection and fall of the candles. However, I failed to see any humor in the situation, for I was left in the dark, and being accustomed to the written sermon, was for the moment nonplussed.

I durst not look over the pulpit or ask for the candles, and my rustic audience were so lost in the fun of the incident as to forget how necessary light is to man's teaching. I made a brief effort at extempore preaching, and then an early and ignominious exit.

That was also an unpleasant fix in which I found myself one Sunday, some twenty years ago.

I had left home rather hurriedly that morning, and just before leaving I had seized from the pocket-handkerchief box a folded square of linen, of the usual shape, size, and texture, and had transferred it to my cassock pocket.

In the earlier part of my discourse, becoming conscious of an impending sneeze, and being unwilling to interrupt the even tenor of my oratory, I fished out my handkerchief with one hand, and then, in the little elegant way that most parsons have, with both hands gave it a shake to release it from its folds.

Having staved off the sneeze by its application, I laid it on the edge of the pulpit, when the passing of an indefinable shade of expression across the upturned faces of my nearest hearers, caused me to dart a glance towards my handkerchief, imagining that it might be slipping over the edge. My eye caught sight of a hole at one side of it which had apparently been imperfectly repaired with some lace, and I gave the thing another shake, to conceal the defect.

To my dismay and confusion, two tiny sleeves and a frilled neck appeared on the confines of my handkerchief and a cold thrill passed over me when I recognised the little object as being a stray part of the attire of my infant daughter.

As I crammed the garment into the recess of my pocket I thought I had never been in such a fix before; for I well knew the keenness of the feminine eye, as well as the readiness of the feminine mind to enjoy such an incident.

A curious case of the pursuit of preaching under difficulties came under my notice. In a country church in the remote districts of the west of England, a swarm of bees had taken up their quarters in the oaken woodwork at the back of the pulpit, to the dismay and discomfort of the weekly occupant of that structure.

During the discharge of his peculiar function, he was not only annoyed with the busy sullen roar of the hive, but his fear of arousing their animosity by the loud challenge of his tones, or by the vibration of the pulpit, was stimulated by the light skirmishers which used to come out and perform all sorts of minatory manœuvres within measurable distance of his nose. The annoyance at length became intolerable and orders were given to smoke out the bees.

This was effectually done; but, unfortunately, the clerk in smoking out the bees set fire to the church, and it was burnt to the ground.

Here notice may be taken of the dangerous mental trick of metathesis—the transposition of letters in a word—which is apt to cover with confusion even those who consider themselves as perfectly safe. A writer in a late number of the *Spectator* adduced some curious examples of this pernicious habit.

He cites the case of a clergyman who, wishing to say that "we all knew what it was to have a half-formed wish in our hearts," astonished his hearers by announcing "that we all knew what it was to have a half-warmed fish in our hearts;" and of another, who, having "started out" to say "we should not bow the knee to an idol," arrived at the conclusion "that we should not bow the eye to a needle."

I can well believe these anecdotes true, for the following instance of the failing came under my own personal observation. A fellow-student, a sensitive-minded man, who had a horror of such mistakes in public, was jokingly telling one day of a mistake which he had heard made by an illiterate man in extempore prayer. The poor fellow was praying for backsliders, but, in the earnestness of his devotion, and quite regardless of the feelings of his hearers, fell to invoking blessings upon "black-spiders!"

Scientific and Useful.

THE TELAUTOGRAPH.—A new invention, called the "Telautograph," has been exhibited in Paris by means of which can be produced by telegraphy any kind of document in the handwriting of the sender.

BRICKLAYING.—The method by which bricklayers' work is successfully carried out in Norway in winter consists in mixing the mortar with unslaked lime. Small quantities are mixed at a time, and used as quickly as possible, while it is still hot, care being taken to use only dry bricks.

THE BONE-CUTTER.—An instrument called the "osteotome" (Greek for bone-cutter, has been invented as an improvement over the tedious and clumsy surgical methods of cutting through bones by means of saws and chisels. It is practically a circular saw revolved at a very high rate of speed by an electric motor. An ingeniously devised shield, which passes around the bone to be operated upon, protects the surrounding flesh from injury.

MOSQUITOES.—The following is said to be a successful method of expelling mosquitoes from a room: Take of gum camphor a piece about one-third the size of a hen's egg, and evaporate it by placing it in a tin vessel, and holding it over a lamp, taking care that it does not ignite. The smoke will soon fill the room and expel the mosquitoes, and, even though the windows should be left open all night, they will not enter the room as long as the odor remains.

IMAGINATION.—An interesting experiment was recently made by a French physician in reference to the relative power of imagination in the two sexes. He gave to 100 of his hospital patients a dose of sweetened water, and shortly afterwards entered the room, apparently greatly agitated, saying he had by mistake administered a powerful emetic. In a few minutes four-fifths of the subjects were affected by the supposed emetic, and were mainly men, while every one of those not affected were women.

OIL ON THE WATERS.—An improved method of distributing oil on the waters consists of a rocket to which is attached a cylinder filled with oil. It is said that the rocket can be fired with accuracy from the ship, and that, when it explodes, the oil is scattered just where it is wanted. In one experiment the rocket was fired to a distance of 1500 feet and less. By the explosion of five rockets at a distance of from 1200 to 1500 feet from the ship, a space of 1500 to 2000 square feet of water was covered with oil, and the waves were smoothed at once. The rocket was fired 900 feet against a gale. The importance of the invention to deep-water sailors consists in the absolute certainty of explosion of the rocket at a sufficient distance to leave the vessel in calm water during a gale.

Farm and Garden.

NOOKS AND CORNERS.—There is perhaps not a nook or corner on the average farm but that may be used for some kind of a crop that will pay well for the raising, and the corners that are now eyesores and bugbears may be sources of income that are not exceeded by any other parts of the farm.

STUBBORNNESS.—To lead a stubborn cow, put a rope around her horns in the usual fashion, and then pass it back and around her ear, then forward and under the rope which goes around the horns, pulling the ear tight against the horn. When the rope is properly arranged, the most stubborn cow will trot along nicely.

INSECTS.—A well-known entomologist expresses the opinion that if fruit-growers wish to be successful they should study the habits of insects and the nature of their food, so that they may be competent to tell friends from foes, and may be able to use insecticides to advantage. The professor affirms that there are in the world 320,000 species of insects, and that from 7,000 to 8,000 may be considered as fruit-pests.

GUINEAS.—Some farmers advocate the breeding and keeping of guineas. They are the most watchful birds, and give loud warning of the first appearance of hawks or other danger. The eggs and the flesh of the fowls are quite equal to those of the ordinary barn-yard fowls. Sixteen eggs are the right number for a clutch. Guineas are great layers. In appearance they are like the peacock—better to look at than to be heard.

TAMING ANIMALS.—Whether it be an elephant, a lion, a seal, a pig, a horse, or a dog, the method is always the same—kindness, patience, firmness; good temper and good judgment. If your pupil makes a mistake, correct it gently but firmly; if he does wrong wilfully, punish him severely, but without anger. That is the way all animals are trained at the circus, and it is the only successful way to teach anything, whether it be a canary bird or an elephant, a monkey or—shall we say a boy?

INJURY TO MEADOWS.—The hoofs of stock do as much damage to grass as the grazing of it. No pasture should be given up entirely to stock. It is better to divide the pasture into sections, permitting the stock to have access to only one section at a time, in order to allow the other portions to recuperate and renew the crop. The shorter the grass is grazed the more injury will be done by the hoofs. On wet land the injury from tramping is greater, hence stock should be kept out of the pasture for a day or two after a rain.

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The Shams of Life.

Many people who would scorn to tell a lie are yet not at all above shams of various kinds. Absolute sincerity and truthfulness in all dealings are, however, just as much moral obligations as the bold and uncompromising "yes" or "no" in answer to a straightforward question. To put on the appearance of having what one has not, or of being what one is not, bears the same relation to an untruth as a state of continual bad temper does to murder. The degrees of guilt may vary, but the type of sin is the same. It is even by no means impossible that a man who in a sudden fit of unreasoning passion commits the act which destroys life, may really be no worse than his respectable neighbor whose chronic frame of mind is bitterness and malice. In the same way the practice of constant shams is very far removed from the crystal purity of truth; so far, that even he who under pressure tells a downright lie may deserve less censure.

There are shams of all sorts. The least reprehensible are those connected with dress: the most foolish are those prompted by social ambition. In the matter of dress, imitation lace and jewels may be worn quite innocently. Their use may be even meritorious, provided there is no wish nor attempt to deceive.

Pretentiousness is the chief characteristic of snobbishness. Nearly as numerous as the sands of the sea are those people who, without uttering downright falsehoods, try to give to others a false idea of their social status. They speak of persons with whom they are barely acquainted, in terms of affectionate and friendly interest. It is, alas, a melancholy fact that very many people are trying to ape social distinction, and in this respect women are the worst offenders. Men see more clearly what is their rightful level, and the sterner realities of their lives in some cases, their reasonableness in others, lift them above such pettiness. It is only those young men who have no profession and a small independence, who devote their misplaced energy to social advancement and to being "seen everywhere." Such men are far worse than the veriest snob that ever wore petticoats.

The people who air chance information of the private affairs of their superiors, are as often as not quite wrong in what they say. They may impose on outsiders like themselves, but they will be seen through directly by anybody who is really behind the scenes. The same penalty of being "found out" and ridiculed awaits the people who affect to be overdone with social duties and engagements, whereas in reality they bitterly resent the neglect they meet with, and would gladly experience the worries and fatigues of which they complain.

Another contemptible affectation is that of wealth. There is no disgrace in poverty, provided it is independent. And yet not only do some poor people pretend to be less poor than they are, but even rich ones sometimes pretend to be more liberally endowed with this world's goods than they are in reality, and would have it believed that their gold is unlimited. Side by side with sham wealth comes sham poverty. The latter is either a cloak of avarice, or else it is adopted in pursuit of the fashion. Sham poverty is also the frequently adopted device of greedy people. Many of those who are always crying poverty would be quite comfortable if they would live according to their means, but they would rather sponge on their rich friends than cut their coats according to their cloth.

Another prevalent sham is that of aristocratic antecedents. Sham virtue, sham religion, sham charity, sham cleverness, and sham foolishness, all deserve to be denounced in turn. Some people would add to the list the "humbug," whom we all see through yet are glad to meet. He is not, however, always a reprehensible creature. If his pleasant ways are part of the deliberate "plan of campaign" of a charlatan who regards society as a field wherein to reap another man's harvest, then his condemnation should be strong. But as often as not the humbug is quite sincere for the moment in his desire to please and to make others happy, and it is only to be regretted that his feelings are unstable.

Why need there be any shams or false pretences? Society would not only be purer but happier without them. Could there be a revolution in favor of absolute sincerity and truthfulness in all things, there would be fewer heartburnings, fewer pricks of conscience, and no shame at detection. Instead of these we should gain in proper pride and independence, and in increased trust and confidence towards our fellow creatures.

However constant the visitations of sickness and bereavement, the fall of the year is most thickly strewn with the fall of human life. Everywhere the spirit of some sad power seems to direct the time. It hides from us the blue heavens; it makes the green wave turbid; it walks through the fields, and lays the damp ungathered harvest low; it cries out in the night wind and the shrill hail; it steals the summer bloom from the infant cheek; it makes old age shiver to the heart; it goes to the churchyard and chooses many a grave.

By a peculiar prerogative, not only each individual is making daily advances in the sciences, and may make advances in morality (which is the science, by way of eminence, of living well and being happy), but all mankind together are making a continual progress in proportion as the universe of existence grows older; so that the whole human race, during the course of so many ages, may be considered as one man, who never ceases to live and learn.

The man who is wantonly profuse in his promises ought to sink his credit as much as a tradesman would by uttering a great number of promissory notes payable at a distant day. The truest conclusion in both cases is, that neither intend or will be able to pay. And as the latter most probably intends to cheat you of your money, so the former at least designs to cheat you of your thanks.

Remember to comport thyself in life as at a banquet. If a plate is offered thee, extend thy hand and take it moderately; if it be withdrawn, do not detain it. If it comes not to thy side, make not thy desire loudly known, but wait patiently till it be offered thee. Use the same moderation towards thy wife and thy children, towards honors and riches.

To bring motives under faithful examination is a high state of religious character. With regard to the depravity of the heart we live daily in the disbelief of our own creed. We indulge thoughts and feelings which are founded upon the presumption that all around us are imperfect and corrupted, but that we are exempted.

To bring the best human qualities to anything like perfection, to fill them with the sweet juices of courtesy and charity, prosperity, or, at all events, a moderate amount of it, is required,—just as sunshine is needed for the ripening of peaches and apricots.

Man's sense of ignorance is one of the greatest of his gifts, for it is the secret of his wish to know. The whole structure and the whole furniture of his mind are adapted to this condition. The highest law of his being is to advance in wisdom and knowledge, and his sense of the presence and the power of things which he can only partially understand is an abiding witness of this law, and an abiding incentive to its fulfilment.

We frequently fall into error and folly, not because the true principles of action are not known, but because for a time they are not remembered; he may, therefore, justly be numbered among the benefactors of mankind who contracts the great rules of life into short sentences that may early be impressed on the memory, and taught by frequent recollection to occur habitually to the mind.

The motives of the best actions will not bear too strict an inquiry. It is allowed that the cause of most actions, good or bad, may be resolved into the love of ourselves; but the self-love of some men inclines them to please others, and the self-love of others is wholly employed in pleasing themselves. This makes the great distinction between virtue and vice.

It is remarked that the modest deportment of real wise men, when contrasted to the assuming air of the young and ignorant, may be compared to the differences of wheat, which while its ear is empty holds up its head proudly, but as soon as it is filled with grain bends modestly down and withdraws from observation.

Profaneness is a brutal vice. He who indulges in it is no gentleman. I care not what his stamp may be in society; I care not what clothes he wears, or what culture he boasts. Despite all his refinement, the light and habitual taking of God's name betrays a coarse nature and a brutal will.

By discovering his prevailing deficiencies, and ordering his life and habits so as to counteract them, a man may exercise that true self control which is alone worthy of the name. No wiser or more valuable lesson can be learned in the whole system of education than thus to know self, and to minister to its deepest needs.

For want of self-restraint many men are engaged all their lives in fighting with difficulties of their own making, and rendering success impossible by their own cross-grained ungentleness; while others, it may be, much less gifted, make their way and achieve success by simple patience, equanimity and self-control.

Of all the dark catalogue of sins there is not one more vile and execrable than profaneness. It commonly does, and loves to cluster with other sins; and he who can look up and insult his Maker to his face needs but little improvement in guilt to make him a finished devil.

During our prosperity, and while things flow agreeably to our desire, we ought with great care to avoid pride and arrogance: for, as it discovers weakness not to bear adversity with equanimity, so also with prosperity; equanimity, in every condition of life, is a noble attribute.

All attempts to urge men forward, even in the right path, beyond the measure of their light, are impracticable; and unlawful, if they were practicable. Augment their light, conciliate their affections, and they will follow of their own accord.

He that follows the advice of reason has a mind that is elevated above the reach of injury; that sits above the clouds in a calm and quiet ether, and with a brave indifferency hears the rolling thunders grumble and burst under his feet.

Great merits or great failings will make you respected or despised; but trifles, little attentions, mere nothings, either done or neglected, will make you either liked or disliked in the general run of the world.

Affectation, says an old philosopher, is to be always distinguished from hypocrisy as being the art of counterfeiting those qualities which we might, with innocence and safety, be known to want.

The World's Happenings.

It helps a razor to lay it aside for a time.

White neckties are termed "dude ribbons" in the South.

A man in Windsor, O., is raising skunks, to see if there's money in it.

"His hat still fits," is a new phrase for a politician with an unswollen head.

A colored preacher near Macon, Ga., has committed to memory the entire Bible

At a fair held in Madison, Wisconsin, a goose was voted to the most popular dude.

The marriage of a West Point, Ga., couple was solemnized in a boat on the Chattahoochee river.

The Duke of Westminster's income is $7.30 a minute. So at least some one who seems to know figures it out.

A syndicate has been formed in Eau Claire, Wis., for the purpose of "raising buffaloes for the sake of their hides."

Recent statistics show that there are about 6800 Catholic churches in this country, to which are attached 3000 parochial schools.

There are fewer churches in Berlin than in any other European capital. Church-goers are less than 2 per cent. of the whole population.

In Chicago a considerate young Swede sailor, who was tired of life, committed suicide in a Mother Hubbard in order that a friend might have his clothes.

A Pike county, Pa., farmer has a monopoly in a crop of white huckleberries that grow on his land, and nowhere else. The berries sell at fancy prices.

It is estimated that 1,000 men exist in the United States who, collectively, own and enjoy more wealth than the whole 7,000,000 farmers and farm laborers in this country.

Locusts are so attentive to crops in Indiana that farmers in certain sections of the State have found it advisable to cover the more valuable trees with mosquito netting.

It is alleged that recently in Nagpore, India, a boy of 16 was offered a sacrifice to the gods, in accordance with a superstition that human sacrifices caused a bountiful harvest.

"How many people know," says a current item, "that the Legislature of Kansas years ago offered a thousand dollars to the first man who raised a family of thirteen children within the borders of the State? Such is a fact."

An eccentric cooper, who committed suicide in Baltimore, left a provision in his will that those who attended his funeral should be given a lunch. He also stipulated that the clergyman officiating at his funeral should receive $5.

At a recent breach of promise suit in Bristol, England, it was testified that during the six years that the defendant, a young man of 27, had paid court to the fair plaintiff, a thousand letters had passed between the lovers—500 on each side.

When her little brother's hat blew off into Quassaick Creek, near Washington's Headquarters, Newburg, N. Y., the other day, Nellie Scharp waded out to get it, and there, within sight of a score of screaming children, the poor girl was drowned.

For the past ten years the owner of a flouring mill at Dubuque, Iowa, has had a sign on his fireproof safe reading: "No money here. Please call at the house." It was intended for burglars, and the other night one called at the house and secured $1870.

Medical science in London is directed to the case of a man who died of hydrophobia, but who had never, according to his own statement, been bitten by either a dog or a cat, or any animal whatever. Prior to death he exhibited all the symptoms of hydrophobia.

The female editor of a temperance paper at Effingham, Ill., publishes every month a list of the men seen drunk in the streets of the town. A citizen whose name appeared in the list denied that he was drunk and sued the woman, who was fined $5 by a justice of the peace.

The ubiquitous nickel and slot automatic delivery machine now appears in New York drug stores, with several slots, each labelled with the name of some common complaint. The nickel having supplied the motive power, a small glass bottle is shot out containing the "appropriate medicine" for the ailment specified.

At the Brooklyn navy yard a contractor is demolishing the New York, a first-class frigate, that never touched the water. This craft was begun during the war, and was to have been built of wood. Then came in the idea of using steel, and for a quarter of a century the half-finished frigate has remained in one of the ship-houses of the navy yard.

The sidewalk in front of some property in Cambridgeport, Mass., was fenced in the other night, and remained so enclosed for 24 hours, to the great inconvenience of passers by. It was explained that the land, or rather that portion of the sidewalk fenced in, belongs to an estate, to retain the title of which it must be inclosed for at least 24 hours once in 20 years.

A tramp, who lately made the rounds of Hartford, Conn., had an ingenious scheme—not new though—for "raising the wind." He exhibited a letter which, he said, he wished to mail at once, and asked for a stamp to put on it, explaining that he had none himself. Many persons, not having stamps with them, preferred to give him two cents, and in this way the tramp was able to do a thriving business.

"As a matter of sweet experience," writes a gentleman to a New York paper, "let me say that a touch of oil of tar on the skin of my 9-year-old boy has kept mosquitoes from molesting him. Before he was bitten hundreds of times every night, and every bite made a lump. The smell is liked by all, I believe. Take an empty four-ounce bottle to any drug store, and for five cents enough will be procured to last a family of five the whole season.

WE MEET ONCE MORE.

BY EDWARD OXENFORD.

We meet once more in after years,
And parted hearts again enfold,
And smiles usurp the throne of tears,
For now the new shall be the old!

We did not know—nor you, nor I—
That life would e'er this meeting see,
And sad—oh, sad the last good-bye,
When breathed by you, love, and by me!

When sorrow dies then joy is sweet,
And so it is with us to-day,
When lips the self-same words repeat
We spoke in years so far away.

The seasons may have come and gone,
And time out-wrought its ruthless will,
'Tis we who are unchang'd alone,
We lov'd of old—are loving still.

Yes, we meet once more in after years,
And hearts as one together blend,
No more to part till death appears,
But one in life until the end!

The Major's Blankets.

BY A. Y. R.

THERE was no reason why Miss Rachel Godwin should have a lodger. That addition to limited finances had once been very welcome, when she was left to fight the world with only a houseful of old-fashioned furniture—a library, of yet more old fashioned medical works, and a collection of obsolete surgical instruments, formerly wielded by her deceased father in an ill-paid country practice.

But the times changed. Better fortune seemed to come in when Miss Godwin opened her doors to an orphan niece, although the portionless girl brought with her no gold save that in the sunny hair which framed her winsome face, and grew in a tantalizing fringe over the sweetest blue eyes in the world.

First one, then two, then three of those mine ventures, which the sanguine doctor always had diagnosed so hopefully, and in which he had continually invested to reap the usual dividend of disappointment, turned out so many "good things," and combined to make Miss Godwin, at least, comfortably off.

She might have managed without the lodger. Still, as advertisements put it, "The house was too large for her requirements," and had it been otherwise, its mistress would have suffered much inconvenience ere parting with the middle-aged, half-pay officer, whose love of rod and line had brought him to Stapleton years before, and kept him ever since the tenant of her first floor.

Major Vincent was Miss Rachel's ideal. In her eyes, his short portly frame was the perfection of manly beauty—his curiously bald head the mark of intellect.

Her admiration would even dare fish-bones; and when the Major brought home enough roach and dace to choke the household, she would pronounce those insipid victims "delicious."

On such occasions, a certain ceremony was observed. The fish were presented with Major Vincent's compliments. Miss Godwin straightway returned an invitation to supper.

And then the aunt would watch the niece's face—and watch in vain—for some reflex of her own appreciation of the homage which was laid at the girl's pretty feet.

Miss Rachel never thought of him for herself.

Her own life was too mournfully distinguished as a blighted existence. No one ever spoke of a plethoric auctioneer, who had sought refuge in Spain, and was understood to have taken her young heart with him to that defaulter's paradise. It was years ago; but still Miss Godwin's most cherished possession was a huge brooch, which contained some sandy hair. The most furious creditors had forgotten; but Miss Rachel was faithful to his memory. Major Vincent came next in her estimation.

So, after twenty-four hours' absence from home, as she jumped out of the train, and scarcely stayed to greet a fair girl, waiting to meet her, Miss Rachel's first inquiry was for the Major.

"Oh, we have not neglected the precious charge. His 'Serene Highness' is in perfect preservation," Grace answered, with no reverence for the exalted title bestowed by herself, in recognition of her aunt's adulation.

There was a tiny flush on the pretty cheeks, and she went on with a light indifference, almost painful to that loyal lady.

"The unkind east wind has made him a trifle hoarse, as might be expected, when an elderly gentleman will sit all day by the riverside in March. His complexion may be a more pronounced yellow—this is curry; and he is certainly rather nervous and fidgety—that is, fretting for your absence."

It was Miss Rachel's turn to color a little.

She always tried a calm unconsciousness when Grace affected to relegate the half-pay Indian officer's affections to her.

"The Major never thinks the house the same in my few absences." Miss Rachel spoke not altogether with regret. "I did not want him to know."

"His sympathetic nature must have felt the absence, and the chilly night so far overcame his innate modesty, as to induce him to write a note to me, in addition to the neatly sealed packet awaiting you. The end of the month—pay day, you know."

"Grace!" Miss Rachel Godwin looked anxiously up and down the road; but the station was left behind them, and no one was about in the keen March wind. "My dear, such very plain—quite coarse—language."

"Alas! I never shall learn refinement," was the mocking answer. "Well, then, it is the day for his 'Serenity's' punctual monthly honorarium. That is a superior expression, almost equal to his well-selected phrases, which demanded an answer."

"An answer! Grace, dear, has he? Do you mean——?"

"I mean that the Major, when not shivering by the waterside, shivers at home."

Miss Godwin's brief gladness, if gladness it were, was dissipated by the quiet interruption:

"The meek request was about his own warmth, and comfort—more bed-clothes, in fact."

"You attended, Grace?"

"Can you doubt it? Our esteemed friend only had four blankets, so I directed Martha to put on another pair. His humble petition was for an eider-down quilt; but, of course, my delicacy could not discuss such details, and he was referred to you in a little letter as ceremoniously polite as his own."

"He was satisfied, dear?"

"Yes; meeting him on the stairs he seemed more than satisfied." Grace's face clouded at the reminiscence. "I hope he will not be so satisfied again. His thanks were too effusive; his bow nearly sent him over the banisters—and—and I think he wanted to kiss my hand."

"How I admire that frank, soldier-like gallantry."

The elder lady was enthusiastic; the younger very decisive.

"I don't particularly; my hand is not for him."

"It was an honor, child; an honor from such a brave soldier, such a perfect gentleman."

"I object to honor from brave soldiers; if they were fifty times as perfect, I shall always be true to Mark."

"Grace, please spare me those allusions. A mere clerk—the drudge of a wine merchant's office, whose father was——"

"Yes; I know, aunt. A bankrupt and all that," broke in the girl. "Is that Mark's fault?"

"I never said so. The young man is well enough in his own sphere." They had reached home; but Miss Rachel paused at the door in overwhelming dignity. "Let him so remain. I refuse to sanction Mr. Mark Leslie's alliance."

"We have nothing half so grand as that. Ours is a simple engagement"—there was a gleam of something akin to defiance in the blue eyes, a heightened color on the fair cheek—"an engagement to which we shall both be ever true, despite all the world."

"Grace, I will not—goodness gracious!" Miss Godwin might well exclaim as she entered her own usually neat and spotless domain.

The hall was splashed with more mud than had ever been there before. Little pools of water were shining everywhere, and the prim lady stared aghast.

* * * * * *

"Goodness gracious!"

It was not altogether a lucid remark, but was repeated by the bewildered lady. Another surprise was coming, and, to meet it with becoming dignity, Miss Godwin sat herself down on the wet chair which an odd-looking young man placed for her, as she inquired with manifest displeasure, "Mr. Leslie, is it you?"

It was not an unnatural question. Mark was anything but a dandy. Still, his clothes were always carefully brushed and well-fitting; his collar immaculate; his auburn hair—Grace would not allow it was red—neatly arranged. Now that last showed bits of grass and river-weed, which same clung round his neck to decorate his shirt-front, whilst the moisture trickled from his boots and marked his track, until, in the half light, that wine merchant's book-keeper might have been a new style of Triton, whose assumed garb of civilization was several sizes too big one way and proportionately scanty the other.

"Is it you?"

There was no doubt, at least, in one person's mind.

The girl fearlessly put both her hands in his two muddy ones, and the touch and her bright smile gave him courage to face the mistress of the desecrated establishment.

"Pardon me, Miss Godwin, I will not affect to be welcome here. Let me assure you that my intrusion is not quite a willing act."

Miss Rachel acknowledged the speech by a frigid stare; and she noticed that he was wearing an overcoat, which, ample enough to button twice around Mark's rather slight frame, yet barely reached below his waist; also that it, of all his garments, was dry.

"I do not know who can have invited you to enter. I cannot think that Major Vincent——"

"He did," put in Mark quickly; and there was a flush glowing through the mud-stains on the young man's cheek. "He did, being doubtless unaware that I had been forbidden these doors."

"And is that gentleman also to be thanked for all this disorder?"

"Exactly; it is mainly his doing. Not but what I may have contributed a little," which, as Mark was standing in a pool of his own drippings, seemed not altogether improbable. "The fact is, Major Vincent has met with a slight accident."

Miss Godwin trembled visibly. Remembering his love of angling, those offending, dirty footprints assumed a terrible significance; and imagination saw the unlucky officer fished out from one of his deepest roach-holes—not pale—even alarm could only picture that saffron visage a delicate, primrose tint, as they bore him home, limp and motionless.

"Mr. Leslie! dear Mr. Leslie!" Mark had never been favored with that adjective before. In her excitement she even took the hand which had been giving Grace's fond fingers a cold bath all this time. "Is he—is he drowned?"

"My good lady, pray be calm. Although Major Vincent certainly did fall into the water, it is all right. He is none the worse, I assure you—certainly not drowned by any means. I chanced to be near the river and was fortunate enough to pull him out. I brought him here, and have just seen him safely to his own room."

"Where you can hear him for yourself, aunt," interposed Grace; "apparently very much alive, calling for a warming-pan, all the blankets in the house, and hot brandy."

"His voice does seem unimpaired."

Then Miss Godwin added illogically: "It is like his brave spirit to suffer and make no moan."

"Positively Major Vincent is unhurt." Mark was very near smiling. "The bank was treacherous, and it landed him in a lot of soft mud, floundering in which he made a very considerable moan. His frightened struggles might have rolled him into deep water had I not come along."

"And he owes his valuable life to your bravery. Grace, dear, Mr. Leslie saved him."

I was more than superfluous for the aunt to challenge the niece's admiration. The girl never doubted her lover's heroism.

"Of course he did," was the proud rejoinder. "My Mark would save anybody from anything. I hope the Major was grateful."

"Without doubt," Mark Leslie smiled again.

"He thanked me as well as his chattering teeth and the pace we came here would let him. He was even so thoughtful as to insist on my wearing this dry coat of his."

"Whilst we keep you standing about in your wet things. Run away, sir, this very instant," commanded Grace.

"We have been inconsiderate, I fear." Anxiety for her favorite relieved, Miss Rachel could think of his preserver. "Go home at once, Mr. Leslie. Wait one moment though." The mistress of the house disappeared. She did not mind leaving those two young people alone together. She was gone a brief space, to return with a bottle of brandy. "Accept this. Take it—in bed—to oblige me."

"I will not promise that, Miss Godwin," after a moment's hesitation over the gift. "But I will drink your health and happier days to us all, and may no harm result to Major Vincent."

The lady was looking kindly after the wine merchant's clerk, so recently condemned, and now marching with a bottle of her best brandy bulging out the Major's coat.

"He is a worthy young man. A very worthy young man. Only——"

Miss Rachel had watched Mark out of sight, and then proceeded upstairs, where a prolonged snore came through the lodger's closed door to comfort her, and interrupt the murmured speech. She was thoughtful, almost tender, as she came down to open the Major's missive to herself; and the yet more scrupulously-folded note enclosed with the usual "honorarium."

With customary deliberation they were counted out.

But those six golden coins set up such a rattling in her shaking hand, that the girl looked across to see a startled, almost incredulous wonder in her relative's face.

"Aunt, what is the matter? Is there a bad sovereign? Has he given notice to quit?"

Miss Rachel Godwin's manner was strange, while the answer was an enigma. "I cannot trust myself to speak just now, dear. Major Vincent is the dearest man—as I am the most fortunate woman in all the wide world. Notice to quit, did you say? No, indeed! Death alone shall ever part us."

* * * * * *

"Major Vincent's very kindest regards, and he is none the worse for his accident, and begs the honor of an interview with Miss Godwin."

It was the answer next morning to her anxious enquiries, and explained his restless tramping overhead for so long.

"His Serenity has been making himself beautiful for ever. Alas! it's not for me. But I'm off."

The aunt had imparted some wondrous information to her niece, and now, as they heard the gentleman to whom it related coming down, Grace, with a mischievous smile, made her escape by the window.

"Be of good cheer, auntie," she cried. As a matter of fact, her relative was in a curious unwonted perturbation. "Be of good cheer. You see, after all, I was right. My benison be on you both."

The Major entered. Like Miss Rachel, as Grace had phrased it yesterday, he was "nervous and fidgety," and when he had, in person, answered her tender enquiries, although there was a chair placed invitingly at the lady's side, he took one at the other end of the room. Apparently he was as interested in the landscape outside, as she was in the pattern of the carpet within.

"My dear madam, you see a humble suppliant—a suppliant very conscious of his own demerits, and who yet aspires to your favor."

Miss Rachel murmured something as he paused for inspiration after getting so far. Her encouraging smile was intended to refute his own disparagement; but his humility insisted on that expression.

"I am conscious of my own demerits! Yet I am so bold—I hoped—that is I am afraid—I mean I ventured—I should say I was afraid to venture to hope——"

Major Vincent halted his verbal squadron. He was floundering in a flood of words, as overwhelming as the ooze, and mud, and tangled weeds—as much beyond his depth as the river from which Mark Leslie had rescued him the day before.

"You had my note?" he jerked out desperately.

The lady inclined her head, and he went on:

"My youth is over, I care not to deny it," generously self-abnegating. "It is over. But youth, as a rule, is not very comfortably off. The toils and dangers of warfare have taught me to appreciate domestic happiness. You know so much, dear Miss Godwin."

"I know more than that," she responded with flattering warmth. "I know that any woman may be proud of a brave soldier's love."

The lady was thumbing at her neck. The old-fashioned gallantry she admired brought him across the room. It impelled him to raise her hand to his lips; and the pin of a brooch which Miss Rachel had made a palpable parade of unfastening, scratched Major Vincent's nose.

"You are very good," he resumed; "to a quiet old soldier habit is second nature. I could not leave Stapleton, and the fishing, and you. I almost feared to offer so prosaic a lot to one whose young life might well have more glowing dreams."

Miss Rachel was rather mystified, and yet pleased. Some of his speech might be vague, but the latter portion was nice.

"Happiness is not of the gay world," she murmured softly; "more is mine than I dared to hope for."

With an impressive air, still meant to attract attention, the speaker put the before-mentioned brooch solemnly from her. As it lay on the table, the capricious April sunshine—it was peeping out at last—lighted up the sandy hair of that auctioneer who so long ago had taken her heart, her love, her truth, in one lot to Spain. Miss Rachel turned her face away, and buried the memory beneath a convenient newspaper.

"It is well to forget the romance of youth," she whispered. "Let the past go. The future will make amends."

It was the soldier's turn to be mystified. He still held fingers which attempted no withdrawal. He was too ceremonious to let them drop.

"It is like your kind heart to live again in the happiness of others. I knew your goodness would give me the dear girl's hand."

"'The — dear — girl's — hand!'" Miss Rachel jerked away her own digits, as she vacantly re-echoed the words: "'The—dear—girl's—hand!' You mean that you would marry my niece!"

"Surely." Her altered tone warned the Major of impending trouble. "Surely."

"It should be an honor; but it is unfortunately impossible."

Miss Godwin's temperature made one great drop from "summer heat" to "freezing." She was by no means sorry to chill and wither the buds of hope. "Quite impossible; the child is engaged already; and"—with emphasis—"to a sincere and estimable young man."

"Pardon me. I fail to understand." The half-pay officer could be immensely stiff when he chose. "My conceit may have misled me; but the young lady, your niece, did refer me to you."

"Stop!" Miss Rachel bravely faced the situation. "It was an unfortunate mistake. You must have made an error in your correspondence. Your note to my niece only related to more"—the speaker's virgin modesty found a fitting word—"to more drapery. That was all. Another hardly comprehensible communication was enclosed to me."

In this awakening from his dreams, as the miserable knowledge dawned upon him, the unlucky Major actually gasped. It was a crushing defeat; but like a skilful general, he prepared to retreat in good order.

"I have been guilty of a prodigious blunder," he groaned. "I was nervous and fidgety"—the girl's words again. "I used the wrong envelopes; and I humbly apologize."

"My dear Major, it is nothing." Uncertain how far she had committed herself, the lady also meant leaving the field with dignity. "Your letter to me brought the usual 'honorarium;' the other part was scarcely read. I deemed it a mere idle pleasantry—a jest for the day—the first of April, you know." The cold smile upon her face was like a gleam of sunshine on an iceberg. Never had her hero seemed less heroic in Miss Rachel's eyes. Yet she had no pity, and cruelly emphasized the date. "Yes, it seemed an April Fool sort of joke," she went on. "Certainly, I was surprised at a gentleman asking my niece for more blank——that is for warmer drapery."

"I would be shot rather than discuss such details with a young lady. It has been a most absurd mistake," groaned the Major, then he stopped.

The reference to his own ease and warmth evoked another reflection. In sober middle-age, with his fixed and methodical habits, comfort was, at least, an equivalent for love. Miss Godwin—the action was yet more significant—had picked up her brooch. The hands replacing it were plump and white. He remembered those hands had always delighted to minister to him, and again he took possession of them.

"Kindest of ladies, bear with me. May not Fate have been wiser than I was? Suppose my letter had been written for you, what would your answer have been?"

She did not tell him; but her fingers lingered in his, though maidenly reserve sealed Miss Rachel's lips. The Major misunderstood her silence. He led her to the window. A young couple were in the garden outside; and Grace's winsome face showed a new happiness.

"That sweet girl will be leaving some day"—the aunt winced—"and you would be very lonely, dear." He had never so spoken before. It brought back her smile. "Very lonely, dear Miss Rachel."

"Lonely no more, Bartholomew." It was Major Vincent's Christian name. Her lips lingered with a gentle cadence on the polysyllables. "Bartholomew, never lonely with you!"

Despite the bliss of the moment, that officer was troubled by a new reflection. The tale would get abroad, and he thought of a certain fair, but mocking face.

"My dear Miss Rachel, let this be our secret. I would rather, much rather, that Grace did not know."

"The child has her own happiness to think of." In view of that evident anxiety, Miss Rachel was content that Mark should claim his bride. "Her own happiness with the Mr. Leslie who rescued you. He is but a clerk"—with the grandeur befitting a prospective officer's wife—"but a highly respectable young man——"

"I should think so," broke in the Major warmly. "The highly respectable young man saved me from a terrible fate, and I owe him more than thanks. His employers, Rack and Binney, are not bad people, though their sherry is not a really dry wine. But that is not their clerk's fault. I must find a better berth for Mark Leslie—not only for saving my life, but for dear Grace's sake. We will all try to make this a very happy and real First of April."

A Midnight Adventure.

BY HARRIET L.

"I SHALL be obliged to start directly," said Mrs. Jesson, looking with a perturbed face at the telegram in her hand; "my sister is very ill, I dare not delay; and yet I hardly like leaving you, Miss Delavel, with only my father and the little ones. So soon after your arrival among us, too."

"Oh, never mind me," I answered cheerfully; "there is nothing to fear, and we will be able to manage very well, Mrs. Jesson, I dare say. About how long shall you be absent, do you think?"

"Probably only a few days if there is a change for the better. Then you won't mind keeping house in my absence?—thanks, many. Mr. Jesson will very likely be home on Monday too, so, as you said, there is nothing to fear. And now to run and dress; I must catch the 12.30 express, if possible."

Half an hour later the carriage was waiting at the door to convey the pretty little mistress of "Les Roses Villa" to the railway station, when Mrs. Jesson, who was just about to enter it, turned back with a hasty exclamation and came to my side.

"My amethysts," she said, "I quite forgot to put them away after showing them to you this morning. They are lying all over the dressing-table, Miss Delavel; would you mind putting them into the case yourself, and taking it into your own room until I return? I don't trust that woman, Pemberton," sinking her voice to a whisper. "I mean to get rid of her on some pretext or other before very long."

I promised to comply with her request, and having watched the carriage out of sight and sent the little ones up to the nursery to play, I turned my steps towards Mrs. Jesson's dainty luxurious bedchamber, where pretty confusion and disorder generally reigned supreme.

Yes, there they are. A glittering mass of rich violet stones in their dull gold setting, worth some considerable amount of money, the gift of a fond husband to his bride six years before, on their wedding day.

All over the table they lay—necklet, earrings, a brooch, a bracelet, and a pin for the hair, in showy confusion.

"How very careless," I thought, as I quickly consigned the stones to their places in the gold-bound morocco casket, and was preparing to carry it to my own apartment, when Pemberton, Mrs. Jesson's lady's-maid, a dark, smooth faced, obsequious woman, stepped out from behind the wardrobe where she had been hanging up some dresses, and glided to my side.

"I was just going to put up the jewels, miss," she said deferentially; "I only came in just about five minutes ago and noticed them lying there. I was out, miss, on an errand for my mistress, and did not assist her to dress, you know."

"Oh, there's no harm done," I said, speaking with an assumed carelessness, while I knew, I felt that the woman's black eyes were scrutinising me closely. "Mrs. Jesson merely asked me to run upstairs and put them away. You had better go down to dinner, Pemberton."

I said this on purpose to get rid of her before removing the jewels from the room. I never quite knew why I possessed such a strange distrustful aversion to the soft-tongued active maid who always treated me with particular respect, and I felt rather ashamed to think suspiciously of a person whose character I had no grounds for contemning in the smallest degree.

However, one can't always help one's feelings; and they proved true in my case when I thought that Pemberton was a snake in the grass.

With a profound curtsey she glided from the room after my suggestion; but as I entered my own chamber a few minutes later, casket in hand, I saw the skirt of a dress whisk round the corner of the staircase and disappear.

"It must have been Pemberton watching me. I wonder if she guesses I am going to sleep with these precious things in my strong box," I thought vexedly; and then the dinner bell clanging out, I had barely time to wash my hands and smooth my hair before going down to fill Mrs. Jesson's vacant chair at the head of the table.

We did not make a large party truly, seated at our Sunday repast on a dull November day.

There was Mrs. Jesson's father—termed "Grandpap" by the household in general—an old gentleman of eighty summers or winters as the case might be, withered and feeble, whose senses were dulled by age, but whose heart was good and charitable. Then there was Maud, my eldest pupil, a little girl of ten, Mr. Jesson's child by a former marriage; Tiny, Mrs. Jesson's first-born, a golden haired sprite of five; and myself, the governess, Mara Delavel, who had entered on my duties at "Les Roses Villa" but a fortnight since. I had been fortunate enough within that limited space of time to completely win the hearts of my little charges and gain my employer's confidence and liking as well, Master Baby, aged two, was not yet promoted to a seat at the dinner table, and directly the meal was over, Maud and Tiny scampered off to be dressed, as nurse was going to take the three for a walk; so I had the afternoon before me free to spend in any way I liked best.

"Grandpapa" retired to his own snug sanctum for his customary after-dinner doze, and I withdrew to the drawing-room, taking up a book from one of the tables and wheeling a comfortable easy-chair to the brightly blazing fire that looked so cheery on this cold November day.

But soon the volume of Sunday reading—I think it was "Memories of Bethany"—dropped from my hand. I began to feel strangely nervous as the time wore on, everything was so still.

Save for the old man asleep in his so-called "study," and the cook in the kitchen, I had the house to myself entirely. Nurse and the children would not be in till tea time; Harriet, the housemaid, had obtained leave to spend the afternoon and night as well with a sick relative; and Pemberton had gone out on some business of her own. Then I pondered on my inherent distrust of the latter, on the fact of my having the custody of those fine and splendid amethysts, and, lastly, with a throb of fear at my heart I remembered that a certain ladder which had been used by some workmen the day before to repair a waste pipe that ran up the side of the house, was placed just across my window, reaching from the garden below to the roof of the loft above.

"It was very careless of the men, they most certainly should have removed it or fixed a board over it before leaving work," I inwardly reflected; "and how foolish of us all not to have noticed the omission before."

It was too late to do anything now, we weak females could never remove that heavy ladder. I laughed at the thought. We must wait until the morrow, but what in the meantime?

Suppose some burglar hearing of the valuables the house contained, should take advantage of the absence of the master and mistress of "Les Roses Villa" to enter it by means of my bedroom window. Never very strong of nerve I turned cold at the bare idea, then chided myself for being so ridiculous.

The ladder had been there the previous night, Saturday; also, of course, I had seen it in front of my window, but I had not given it a thought, having had a distracting headache, and gone to bed early to sleep off the pain.

Now all seemed different. I suppose my being left in charge of a comparatively strange place, together with Mrs. Jesson's absence, made me so timorous, at any rate I gladly hailed the children's return a little later, as it put a stop to my cogitations for the nonce.

Tea was over. All my trivial duties for the day were done. At 7 Tiny went to bed, at 8 Maud followed, and I accompanied her up to the pretty night nursery shared by the three children, to look at the small sleepers in their cribs, and kiss each little rosebud face as I had made my nightly practice since my advent at "Les Roses."

9, 10, 11, clearly and slowly the old stair clock sounded each hour.

All the household—save myself—had retired to rest. I felt strangely nervous sitting over my smouldering fire; the woman Pemberton had not returned home too; where could she have gone, I wondered.

There was a faint gleam of moonlight slowly becoming visible through the darkly clouded sky, but no sound of any description broke the monotonous silence as the night advanced further, save at long intervals a far distant roll of wheels.

Then these too died away altogether. The stair clock sounded 12 strokes. I rose shivering from my seat beside the fireplace, with its grate full of cold ashes, and proceeded quickly to undress, my heart beating painfully the while.

"How foolish I am," I muttered angrily; "what can I possibly have to fear? Why should I imagine, because a gleaming white ladder is placed in a tempting position over my bedroom window, that burglars must necessarily enter the house; besides, who is to know there is valuable jewelry contained in this room? unless Pemberton discloses the secret to anyone," an uncomfortable voice seemed to add. Pemberton! well, my fear of the woman was well nigh swallowed up in vexation. How dared she, without asking permission as Harriet had done, stay out to this hour, probably for the whole night, just because her mistress happened to be from home. Inwardly resolving to tell Mrs. Jesson immediately on her return, I completed my preparations for retiring to rest, and got into bed intending to sleep as the saying is, "with one eye and one ear open," then speedily fell into the arms of Morpheus.

Always a very light sleeper, it must have been about 2 o'clock in the morning when becoming conscious of a peculiar slight noise, I awoke as easily as possible, regaining all my senses in a moment.

"It is burglars," thought I, "and they have just entered the garden gate, knowing the unprotected state of the house. Great Heaven! what shall we do?"

I held my breath and listened. Silence for a moment, then soft muffled footsteps on the gravel below my window; subdued voices that my strained ears could hardly catch, and the creak of the garden gate again.

Quick as lightning I comprehended all the terrors of our situation. There was the old man—feeble and helpless almost as a child, quietly sleeping in his comfortable chamber at the back of the house; the excitement and sudden terror might kill him if awakened.

Then there were the three little ones, all wrapped in profound slumber; cook was a very heavy sleeper, and, as she confessed herself, exceedingly hard to rouse; Harriet was out, and I did not know whether Pemberton had returned, of course, after I went to bed or not; besides, she was the last person I would be willing to apply to in this emergency.

If I left my room to rouse cook or nurse, what good would it do? Nothing was more likely than that such a proceeding would result in both, neither at all strong minded females, going into a fit of hysterics; we might all be gagged or murdered if such were the case.

Besides, it would be my room the thieves would enter first in search of those precious amethysts, and if found and carried off triumphantly while I rushed fearfully from the apartment, how could I ever confront Mrs. Jesson again?

All these thoughts passed through my mind instantaneously, and as soon, almost, I had planned my course of action.

With a silent cry to Heaven for help, I sprang from my bed, and without striking a light caught up a large dark shawl, threw it over my night dress, and stealing to the window with my heart beating nigh to suffocation, I raised a tiny corner of the blind and looked out.

By the faint gleam of the moonlight I could discern three dark figures at the foot of that dreadful ladder; two had lanterns with slides, the other, a tall burly man, had already begun his ascent, standing on the lowest rung and steadying himself with one half, while the other stretched out received one of the dim lights, which he at once slung round his neck, and prepared with the agility of a cat to climb up higher.

Another moment and he would be within my room.

I knew the windows of the one underneath, Mrs. Jesson's, were securely locked, but the workmen had tied the cords that supported the ladder, in at my window, around the legs of my dressing-table, in firm knots; therefore the sash was of necessity partly unclosed, nothing would be easier than to push it up from the outside and effect an entrance.

Now was the time for action; there was only poor frail me, for the rest were all fast asleep, unconscious of danger. My plan was a simple one, formed in utter desperation.

"Les Roses Villa" was a newly-built house standing back, surrounded by trees, in a large garden; the road leading past it was a very lonely one, and the several houses in our immediate neighborhood were all uninhabited.

There was little chance of making myself heard if I screamed for help, so, like David, in the case of Goliath, I took the simplest weapon within my reach—a jug of water.

There were two jugs, old-fashioned ones, and a can full of water besides; speedily I carried them all to the window, and took from one of my drawers a small bell, a model of the celebrated one taken from the top of the Burmese Pagoda.

My breath came thick and fast, my heart seemed almost to stop beating; how I passed those few agonised minutes I could never afterwards recall. All was still as death save for the stealthy creaking of those footsteps ascending higher—higher, coming nearer—nearer, and a slight crunching of the gravel below.

Now or never!—victory or death!—would a merciful Heaven help me in this my hour of need?

I raised the blind, and threw up the window sash as a head appeared on a level with the ledge, and seizing with almost superhuman strength one of my heavy water jugs, I flung the contents full in the face of this marauding invader, who confronted me.

It was all done in a moment. With a hoarse astonished cry, the would be-thief letting go his hold of the ladder, fell, not on the ground below. No, there was a smoking-room built out from the dining-room, which had been recently added to the house, through an eccentric fancy of our landlord, and over the smoking apartment a bath-room, which gave the villa rather a peculiar appearance from one side; the roof of the bath-room lay like a broad ledge to the left of the bed-room windows, against which the ladder was set, and it was providential that the man, blinded by the water I had thrown and letting go his hold, had swerved to that side and fallen on where the roof jutting out to the rungs of the ladder, had preserved him from an untimely death.

But it was a perilous position; the man was hanging half on the ledge, half on the ladder.

There was a confused murmur, a stifled exclamation from the two below, and summoning all my courage I leant from the window.

"Cowards!" I cried, "to enter an undefended house in the absence of its master. Go, or it will be the worse for you; we are not so unprotected as you think." And catching up the other jug of water, I skilfully emptied the contents over the head of one of the dark figures below—the other turned and fled; then taking my bell I rang it long and loud, shouting, "Murder!—thieves—murder!"

An oath from the man on the gravel path, and he made a spring towards the ladder as if to ascend.

I had still my water can, and seeing the individual on the ledge, struggle to raise himself with a volley of execrations, I emptied it over him in fierce despair. There was no help now, my resources were at an end.

No, aid was coming in some shape. I heard a rough voice say, "Hallool" the

crunch of heavy boots on the gravel. I saw the man at the foot of the ladder start away, and dashing madly over the palings make his escape as two stalwart policemen with their bull's eye lanterns put in an appearance.

They were just in time to secure the wretch who, drenched and shivering, was endeavoring eagerly to effect a descent to *terra firma* again.

The danger was over; a red mist swam before my eyes. As in a dream, I saw the frightened astonished faces of the servants as they came running into my chamber, aroused by hearing the bell ring and my loud cries for assistance.

As in a dream, I saw the stout guardians of the law handcuff their prisoner, who finding his attempts at escape futile, had sullenly submitted to be captured without further resistance.

"I had a suspicion that this ere ladder would be the cause of some mischief or other," one of the policemen explained, "and so I determined to keep a sharp look out; but it seems the rascals were a bit too clever, seeing as how they took advantage of the time when I'd turned down another street on my beat; but coming back I thought I heard voices in this garden and see'd the light of a bull's eye, so I just went softly round the corner an' whistled for my mate, at the very minute that I heerd the lady's bell ring an her cries of 'Murder!' If it warn't for that young lady," admiringly to the terror-stricken servants, "you women might have been gagged and frightened to death. Look out now, attend to the lady, she's fainting."

And he said right, for having heard every word he uttered clearly to the end, the almost supernatural strength and courage that had buoyed me up in my hour of need, as suddenly deserted me as it came, and I fell swooning to the ground.

* * * * * *

"Can I ever thank you enough, Miss Delavel?" said little Mrs. Jesson bending over my bedside with grateful tears in her pretty blue eyes; "you have saved my property, the amethysts, and probably my children's lives, by your brave conduct. You must forgive me for not being able to express all that I feel."

It was the evening of the following day—Monday—to the joy and relief of the entire household, the mistress of "Les Roses Villa" had returned as suddenly as she had departed.

The night which had been for us so tragical had also been the night of the crisis of her sister's illness, which had most unexpectedly taken so favorable a turn that almost all the danger had departed, when Mrs. Jesson received cook's hurried telegram, and came back immediately.

I had been ill; remaining all day in bed, in obedience to the doctor who had been hastily fetched by somebody when I fainted.

The highly strung tension of my nerves had given way completely, and I felt weak and sick lying back on my pillows, but listening with a quiet thrill of satisfaction to the heartfelt thanks and praises Mrs. Jesson poured upon me.

"I only did my duty," I said in answer, "you left the house in my charge, you know, Mrs. Jesson. But what become of Pemberton, has she returned?"

"Returned! my dear child, we were both right in our innate distrust of that woman; she will never enter my doors again. Only to think that she watched you carry my amethysts into your room, and then went and told those men who are regular professional thieves, and connected with her in some disgraceful way. She has disappeared, also one of her accomplices; the other wretch—the would-be thief, who was brought up to court today gave evidence against her; he has received a sentence of three months' imprisonment, I am glad to say. I only wish Miss Pemberton could be found, and served likewise."

So thus ended the midnight adventure, in which kind Providence made me the instrument of saving a defenceless household from robbery and danger, perhaps murder.

Mr. Jesson returned that night also, and the ladder being now removed there was no further cause for fear.

As for my humble self, the story of my novel expedient in outwitting the thieves got wind in the neighborhood, and among the Jesson's friends as well; earning for me more approbation than I fear I deserved, for it was but my duty to fulfil to the utmost the trust I had undertaken.

On my birthday—which occurred a month later—I received a magnificent bracelet, composed of costly amethysts and diamonds, from Mr. and Mrs. Jesson. "A trivial token of their gratitude, and a souvenir of my midnight adventure."

SOME QUEER FLOWERS.

If Baron Munchausen had ever in the course of his travels come across a single flower one standard yard in diameter, fifteen pounds avoirdupois in weight, and forming a cup big enough to hold six quarts of water in its central hollow, it is not improbable that the learned Baron's veracious account of the new plant might have been met with the same polite incredulity which his other adventures shared with those of Bruce, Stanley, Mendez Pinto, and Du Chaillu. Nevertheless, a big blossom of this enormous size has been well known to botanists ever since the beginning of the present century.

When Sir Stamford Raffles—from who it takes its name Rafflesia—was taking care of Sumatra during its temporary annexation by England, he happed one day to light upon a gigantic parasite, which grew on the stem of a prostrate creeper in the densest part of the tropical jungle. It measured nine feet across: it had five large fleshy petals with a central basin; and it was mottled red in hue, being, in fact, in color and texture surprisingly suggestive of raw beefsteak.

The stalks of what are called Grass of Parnassus have each five snowy petals, and at the base of every petal stands a little forked organ, with eight or nine thread-like points, terminated, apparently, by a small round drop of pellucid honey. Touch one of the drops with your finger, and, lo! you will find it is a solid ball or gland. The flower, in fact, is only playing at producing honey.

Yet so easily are the flies for whom it caters taken by a showy advertisement, that not only will they alight on the blossoms and try most industriously for a long time together to extract a little honey from the dry bulbs, but even after they have been compelled to give up the attempt as vain they will light again on a second flower, and go through the whole performance again.

Most of the flowers specially affected by carrion flies have a lurid red color, and a distinct smell of bad meat. For the most part they attract the insects by their appearance and odor, but reward their services with a little honey and other allurements. This is the case with the curious fly-orchid, whose dull purple lip is covered with tiny drops of nectar, licked off by the fertilizing flies.

The very malodorous carrion-flowers are visited by bluebottles and fleshflies, while an allied form actually sets a trap for the fly's proboscis, which catches the insect by its hairs and compels him to give a sharp pull in order to free himself: this pull dislodges the pollen, and so secures the desired cross-fertilization.

The Alpine butterwort sets a somewhat similar gin so vigorously that when a weak fly is caught in it he cannot disengage himself and there perishes wretchedly like a hawk in a trap.

These cases lead on naturally to certain other very queer flowers which similarly take advantage of the stupidity of flies by actually imprisoning them in a strong inner chamber, until they have duly performed the penal servitude of fertilization, enjoined upon them by the inexorable blossom.

The South European birthwort, a very lurid-looking and fly-enticing flower, has a sort of cornucopia-shaped tube, lined with long hair, which all point inward and so allow small midges to creep down readily enough, after the fashion of an eel-buck or lobster-pot. But to get out again is the great difficulty.

Try as they will, the little prisoners can't crawl back upward against the downward-pointing hairs. Accordingly they are forced, by circumstances over which they have no control, to walk aimlessly up and down their prison yard, fertilising the little knobby surface of the seed-vessel with pollen brought from another flower. But as soon as the seeds are all impregnated, the stamens begin to shed their pollen and dust over the gnats with the copious powder. Then the hairs all wither up, and the gnats, released from their lobster-pot prison, fly away once more on the same fool's errand.

From plants that imprison to plants that devour insects alive is a natural transition. The leaf of the sundew is round and flat, and it is covered by a number of small red glands, which act as an attractive advertisement to the misguided midges. Their knobby ends are covered by a glutinous secretion, which glistens like honey in the sunlight, and so gains for the plant its common name. But the moment a hapless fly, attracted by hopes of meat or nectar, settles quietly in its midst, on hospitable thoughts intent, the viscid liquid holds him tight immediately, and clogs his legs and wings, so that it is snared just as a bird is snared with bird-lime. Then the leaf with all its 'red-tipped mouths' closes over him slowly but surely and crushes him by folding its edges inward gradually toward the centre. The fly often lingers long with ineffectual struggles, while the cruel, crawling leaf pours forth a digestive fluid—a vegetable gastric juice, as it were—and dissolves him alive piecemeal in its hundred clutching suckers.

The Californian pitcher-plant, or Darlingtonia, has its flower hooded and lidded; but the inside of the hood is furnished with short hairs, all pointing inward. The whole arrangement is colored dingy orange, so as to attract the attention of flies, and it contains a viscid digestive fluid in which the flies are first drowned and then slowly melted and assimilated.

The pitchers are often found half-full of dead and decaying assorted insects. This circumstance, of course, has not escaped the sharp eyes of the practically-minded Californians, who accordingly keep the pitchers growing in their houses to act as fly-catchers.

The principle of Venus's fly-trap is somewhat different, though its practice is equally nefarious. This curious marsh-plant, instead of setting accurssed bowls of liquid for its victims, lays a regular gin or snare for them, on the same plan as a common snapping rat-trap. The end of the leaf is divided into two folding halves by the midrib, and on each half are three or five highly sensitive hairs. The moment one of these hairs is touched by a fly, the two halves come together, enclosing the luckless insect between them.

As if on purpose to complete the resemblance to a rat-trap, too, the edges of the leaf are formed of prickly jagged teeth, which fit in between one another when the gin shuts, and so effectually cut off the insect's retreat. The plant then sucks up the juices of the fly; and as soon as it has fully digested them, the leaf opens automatically once more, and resets the trap for another victim.

QUEER CUSTOMS.

I went over from Chefoo to the port of Chemulpo, a voyage of little more than twenty-four hours, arriving on September 26. I had to wait some days for Bishop Bickersteth, as the steamers from China and Japan were not so arranged as to bring us to Corea at the same time.

There are very few European residents at the port as yet, but Chinese and Japanese settlers are doing a brisk trade. After two days I rode up to the capital (Seoul), a distance of about twenty-six miles, and was kindly received at the English consulate-general.

The city struck me as beautifully situated, hills rising up on all sides, some bare, some covered with pines. The approach to it is very picturesque, the old wall like a piece of patchwork, repaired in a hundred places, climbing up the hill sides and in the more ancient parts overgrown with creepers.

The main streets are very wide and covered with a white gravel-like crumbled rock, pleasant to walk on compared with the black dust of Pekin, but not very well fitted for driving. This does not matter much, for the city is almost entirely without vehicles.

Ordinary folks walk, and the gentry and mandarins either ride or are carried in chairs. The appearance of these great wide streets full of men and women, clad for the most part in light-colored garments, is very curious.

The absence of carriages of any kind makes the whole scene comparatively noiseless, so that it suggests, as some one has said, a city of ghosts.

The men are very well-clad, except about the feet, which are clumsy and untidy.

They wear hats which look like gauze, but are, I believe, really composed of horsehair; these hats have high, square crowns and broad, flat brims, and remind one of those worn by the Welsh; they are perched on the very top of the head, and would not stay there at all but that they are tightly fastened under the chin.

The outer garment is long and generally made of some light gauze, blue or buff, green or black, a light shade of buff being the prevailing color. Mourners dress in a fine sackcloth, and wear an enormous hat of basket-work as large as a small umbrella, but like a half-opened umbrella in shape, so that the face is almost hidden; they carry a little sackcloth screen stretched between two sticks, which is supposed to be held in front of their faces.

When carrying this they are not required to speak or show their features, and mourning thus affords an excellent and complete disguise.

It was by the use of this dress that the French priests penetrated into the country, when discovery would have been death.

The women when not carrying a burden on the head wear a bright green cloth thrown over them in the form of a hood, which almost conceals the face. They are completely, but rather awkwardly, dressed; the waist band is placed very high up, and the younger girls remind one of the picture of our last century dress.

The women, on the contrary, are frequently fine looking, with gentle and intelligent countenances. They appear to be very indolent and quite unaccustomed to do a good day's work.

Carpenters, for example, will pursue their occupation with a pipe fifteen inches long in their mouths.

At Chemulpo I noticed one thing in this connection which struck me much. Some earth had to be shovelled into baskets and conveyed to a lower level for the purpose of filling in the foreshore.

The native spade in use, the blade of which is pointed, was being worked by three men; the very long handle was guided by one man that the spade might meet the loosened earth at a good angle; through the blade a rope was inserted crosswise, and each end of this rope was held by a man; these two between them managed to drag the spade through the earth, while the man in the middle guided the very trifling amount of soil which it carried into the destined baskets. In the whole day I suppose the three men would not get through what one Cumaman would accomplish in half a day.

The men, however, carry very large and heavy burdens on their backs, strapped on to a kind of saddle made for the purpose; in some parts of southern Europe the porters carry in a similar way.

We were told that the Coreans differ considerably in various parts of their country, and that in some districts they were much more energetic and laborious.

THE STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE.—Harsh and unjust criticism of others' conduct or performance often results from using one's own ideal of excellence as a test. A capable but captious person examines a piece of work or surveys a course of action, and sees, or thinks he sees, how it might have been improved. At once he begins to find fault, to depreciate, to blame, forgetting that the standard by which he judges is his own, not that of another. It remains at least very doubtful if he would have come up to it in the same circumstances; but to censure another for not bringing his practice into harmony with the censor's imaginings is surely unreasonable.

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

The other day Dr. Mary Walker, who continues to be one of the curiosities of Washington, asked the President for an interview, but did not get it. On her way over to the White House the Doctor stopped at the Treasury Department and rode upstairs in an elevator. One of her fellow-passengers carried a lighted cigar in his hand, and she demanded that he extinguish it in her presence. "When you take off trousers and put on petticoats I will put out my cigar," said the man.

A quotation contained in the new mammoth English dictionary, makes it clear that the feminine article of attire, the bustle, is at least a century old. In 1788, one T. Monroe produced the following couplet:

Such locks the nymphs now wear in silks that rustle,
In rich luxuriance reaching to the bustle.

The word, consequently, has literary sanction; the thing itself, if rude man may speculate on the matter, is probably as old as the area at which women resigned the old classical flowing robes, and adopted a more artificial style of clothing.

An unusually interesting sight was witnessed lately in the procession of carriages which crowd Fifth avenue, New York in the afternoon. A close carriage drawn by a pair of bang-tailed cobs, resplendent in silver harness and trappings, with silver chains jingling and dashing, on the box the orthodox, auk matic, motionless coachman and lackey, in livery and top-boots, and inside, sitting on the back seat, with aristocratic, sensitive noses in the air, sat a brace of greyhounds, as motionless, dignified and serene as the proudest, most self-satisfied lady in the procession.

"Function" is the latest word in England. Everything now from the laying of a corner-stone to a carpet dance is a function. The writers of small talk are reveling in it. It sets off the most indifferent paragraph and adorns the most inane conversation. "We might as well brace up and endorse it," says a New York paper; "when the summer voyagers come home they will bring the word with other impediments, just as they had brought 'fad,' 'don't you know,' 'fetching,' 'out of touch' and other London terms, and 'function' will run its course like the measles, whooping cough and other slight epidemics not dangerous but tiresome."

The Queen of Sweden is undergoing peculiar treatment to restore her nerves to a normal condition. Her doctors have ordered her to rise early, make her own bed and dust and sweep the room. She has to take a walk in the garden before breakfast, work among the flowers afterwards and lead an active outdoor existence all day long. Already the Queen has been benefitted by this curious "cure, the "chambermaid treatment" as it is called. The same mode of life might benefit many a woman in this country who has lost her grip on her nerves. "That tired feeling" the advertisement speaks of will succumb after a time to a course in bedmaking and dusting.

It is fashionable now, it is said, for husbands and wifes to keep separate bedrooms. Kings and Queens have set the example, and the newly coupled folks in our fashionable world are following it. No secret is made of the custom. The nicest of our output of June brides will calmly show you her own dainty boudoir, and then exhibit the bedroom of her husband. The idea is that the bride must not be intruded upon, and that she must be left to invite her husband to call sooner or later, as the fancy suits her. In one instance the wedded couple went right away on diverse tours, to meet at the end of a week in some distant place, the locality being kept a secret from their acquaintances.

One of the strangest clubs in the world has just been organised in Mexico. It is composed of journalists who have been imprisoned for political offences; the relative standing of the members is based in general upon the length of the sentences they have served, or rather of the periods during which they have languished in jail, for unless the Government of Mexico is grossly libeled the formality of a trial is commonly dispensed with in the case of editors who have abused the privilege of free speech. In determining a member's relative position in the new association the severity of his experience of prison-life is taken into account; and this sometimes modifies his standing, giving him a higher rank than others who have served longer but under less distressing conditions.

Lewanee County, Michigan, has a co operative telegraph line which began by two farmers connecting their houses with a wire and which has extended, until now it has sixty-five miles of wire and ninety offices, two-thirds of which are in farmhouses and others in stores where the farmers trade. Every farmer is his own operator, battery man, and line repairer, and can use the lines as much as he pleases. They communicate with each other, give orders to the stores and receive early information of important news over their wire. One farmer had his life saved by it. He took poison by accident, and there was no doctor within several miles, but he telegraphed to the nearest one and told what was the matter, and was directed to fill himself up with sweet milk and keep filled until the doctor could get there. The prescription was successful.

Our Young Folks.

TRUE AS STEEL.

BY E. HARRADAN.

YOU have read in history no doubt, of a war between the English King Charles and his Parliament, and I am not going to give you a history lesson, but I want to remind you that there were good brave men on either side, and many of them had been great friends together before the war broke out.

Colonel Howard, who fought for King Charles, and Colonel Graham, one of the Parliamentary officers, had been firm friends from boyhood, and no doubt they grieved to have to fight against each other, although they both did what they thought to be their duty.

Colonel Graham lived in a village near Newbury; he did not feel any anxiety in having his wife and little daughter Bridget there, because they were at a safe distance from the dangers of the war.

One day when he was in camp he received a message from his old friend Howard asking if he might send his wife and his son Lionel to Newbury, as it was not safe for them to be any longer in their own home at Oxford.

Of course Colonel Graham consented, and a few days afterwards a big strong Roundhead arrived at Mistress Graham's house, bringing with him a timid lady and Lionel, who, when his cloak was taken off, looked every inch a little Cavalier.

It was Lionel's one desire to become a soldier and fight for King Charles.

"If time would only fly quickly, father," he said, "and every hour would be a year, I should soon be able to go into camp with you. I am strong enough now!"

"You're not quite tall enough, Lionel, my lad," answered his father smiling, "but I am sure when you are older you will be a good and brave soldier. Remember, always be loyal to your king whatever happens."

Now when Colonel Howard said "good-bye" to them before sending them to Newbury he took Lionel apart and whispered—

"Little son, be gentle to your mother and loyal to your king. I go to fight his battles, and if I die, then you will take my place when you are old enough. Do you hear me, my brave boy?"

Lionel clung to his father, and promised by the big sword which Colonel Howard wore at his side that he would be gentle to his mother and loyal to his king. And these were the last words he ever spoke to his father.

That was anxious time for all, but Mistress Graham was most loving to her guests, and quaint little Puritan Bridget, in her odd gray frock and stiff white collar, was a sweet tiny hostess to Lionel. She was never tired of playing with him or talking to him. I think, too, that she secretly admired his rich velvet suit and lace collar and ruffs, and his golden hair which streamed over his shoulder in love curls.

One day when they were playing on the lawn Bridget's mother called Lionel in, and putting her hand on his golden head she said gently—

"Lionel, I have bad news for you. I know you are a brave little man."

"I am quite brave," he answered, but his voice trembled, and his eyes were full of tears.

"Dear Lionel," she said, "you will never see your poor father again. He has died fighting for the king."

He turned from her with a cry and sobbed passionately.

"Father dear, father dear!" he cried. That was all.

Mistress Graham let him have a good cry, and in a few minutes he lifted his sad tear-stained face and said quietly—

"Now I will go to my mother; you have told her about dear father?"

"No, Lionel," answered Mrs. Graham; "it is for you to tell her and comfort her. And see, my child, the messenger who brought the sad news brought your poor father's sword too—he sent it to you as his dying gift."

Lionel knelt down and kissed the sword and lifted it; it was heavy for him but he bore it bravely away and went straight to his mother, and there, kneeling by her side, he whispered:

"Mother darling, you have only me to care for you! I will be a good son, and I will fight the king's battles bravely. Mother dear, this is father's sword, but he himself can never come back to us."

Then he could bear his grief no longer, and the little fellow burst into tears and nestled close to his widowed mother.

The following day news came that King Charles and his army were at Newbury.

Lionel longed to be there too, and all day long he thought of the promise given to his dear father that he would be loyal to the king they both loved.

"Father has fallen," he said to himself; "ought I not to serve in his place? Wouldn't he like to know I was with the king? Didn't he send me his sword to use bravely as he always used it?"

His little head was full of ideas; he sat thinking of his dear father, his gentle mother, his strong sword, his king. He recalled to mind those jolly rides he and his father had taken together; he heard his father's voice crying—

"Hurrah, Lionel! Keep tight to your pony, and we'll have a merry, merry gallop. Pull in your reins, my boy! Well done, little horseman. I am proud of you!"

Then the tears trickled down Lionel's cheeks as he remembered that he would never again hear that voice.

"I will try to be like him," he thought—"every inch like him."

That night, when his mother sat by his bedside, he held her hand and kissed it gently.

"You have me, mother dear," he whispered. "I am not worth much yet, but I will try hard to be good and brave so that you may be proud of me."

Once or twice she arose to go, but he called her back each time for another long kiss; it seemed as he could not bear to part with her this night.

At last he let her go and then he arose from his bed and went to look at the sword. He lifted it.

"I think I could manage to carry it there," he said to himself. "I should not like to go without it."

Then he looked at his clothes and smiled at them.

"They were all very well when I wasn't a man," he thought; "now I want something stronger, more like father's clothes."

He chose the plainest velvet suit he could find, and the strongest shoes; he was going to put aside his ruffs, but he remembered that his father wore them, and so he let them remain in the neck and sleeves of his coat.

"I must take the portrait of mother with me," he said; "I can wear the locket under my shirt and look at it when I want to look at her dear face. She will grieve that I am gone, but she knows that I must go and serve for poor dead father."

Then in the stillness of the night the child crept out, bearing the great sword. Once it knocked the stair and Lionel was afraid that he would be heard, but no one in the house was disturbed by the noise, and he got safely into the open air. Lionel did not know what fear meant.

He trudged steadily along the road to Newbury, grateful to the clear moon for lighting him on his way; the sword weighed heavily on his arms, but he was proud to carry it, for had not his father borne it bravely into battle?

At last he saw the lights of the king's camp just outside Newbury, and his heart began to beat with excitement, but never a doubt crossed his mind nor a fear enter his heart.

"No one will wish to hurt me," he said, "when I have come to serve my king."

"Who goes there?" cried a gruff voice suddenly, and a lantern was flashed into Lionel's face by a soldier on guard.

"If you please, sir," answered Lionel fearlessly, "I have come to fight for King Charles. I heard he was here and I have walked all the way from the village. I'm Colonel Howard's son—he was killed, and I must serve instead of him.

The soldier looked at the small eager face and knew that the boy spoke the truth.

"Come along with me," he said, taking the child's hand.

Lionel was brought before the commanding officer, to whom he told his simple tale with fearless confidence.

"Father's dead," he said sadly, "and I've come to fight for our king. I'm father's only son. He sent me his sword. He must have meant me to take his place."

He looked a gallant little cavalier, standing with the sword pretty near as big as himself. The General stooped down and kissed him and patted him kindly on the head, and told him to wait there while he went to fetch someone who would be a friend to him.

Then in a few minutes he came back with a strange gentleman, who lifted Lionel on his knee and kissed him many times and said—

"Welcome, brave little soldier; we will take care of you and love you; and you shall serve the king."

And Lionel showed the kind stranger his father's sword, and said—

"Do you think he must have meant me to fight for our dear king? I promised him I would be true. And I'm ready to die for King Charles."

"God bless you, little man," answered the strange gentleman, whose eyes were dim with tears.

"It was hard to part with dear mother," said Lionel sadly, "but I have her portrait with me; I can look at her and think of her."

Then he showed the stranger the small locket which held his mother's picture.

"Do you know, sir," he whispered, "I'm very tired. The sword was heavy to carry. But I'm glad I brought it."

Then his head fell wearily on the stranger's breast, and in a few minutes Lionel was fast asleep in King Charles's arms.

"Let him be," he said gently to those who wished to take the child away from him. "The king whom he loves watches over him."

When Lionel awoke he found himself lying on the ground wrapped in a big cloak. The stranger lay by his side.

"Where am I?" he asked anxiously. "Ah, I remember now! I'm in the king's camp. Tell me, sir, shall I ever see the king?"

Then the stranger smiled and laughed.

"I am King Charles," he said, "and I am proud to have you for my faithful little soldier."

"Oh, my king!" cried Lionel, kneeling and kissing the royal hand which had caressed him so tenderly.

"If dear mother knew I was with you," he whispered to King Charles, "she would be glad, I am sure."

"She knows by this time where you are," answered the king, as he stroked the boy's golden hair; "I sent a trusty messenger to tell her that her brave son had come to me, and that I would care for him as a father. And now, my little man, you must go home to her until I send some faithful soldiers to fetch you and her to our court at Oxford."

"Then I'm of no use now," said Lionel sorrowfully. "I'm too small and weak. Father told me this, but I had forgotten."

"But you are of use," answered the king; "you have made me very happy to think that I have such brave hearts to love me. And it is not only by fighting the king's battles that you serve him; you can serve him by being true and faithful, and believing that he is true and faithful too."

"I do believe this, dear king!" cried Lionel.

Then the king kissed and blessed him and took one of his jewelled rings and put it on the child's finger.

"Remember all your life," he said, "that the king kissed and blessed you because you loved him and trusted him. Wear the king's ring until you can bear your father's sword. And now go home to your mother and wait patiently until I send for you both. The king has given his word and he will not break it."

Then he summoned a soldier, who took Lionel on his horse and rode with him to Mistress Graham's house, where he was received by his mother. She clasped him to her heart and whispered—

"Dear son, you are worthy of your father."

And he showed her the king's ring, and told her how he had slept in the king's arms and received the king's kiss. He told his story to Bridget, who listened, wondering whether it was not all a fairy story. But it was no fairy tale, for there was the ring to prove that Lionel had been to the king's camp; and two days afterwards came an escort of Royalist soldiers to take Lionel and his mother to the king's court.

Then Lionel said "good-bye" to his Puritan friends, and although he was going to join their enemies, they could not help loving him and grieving to part with him. Even the rough old Roundhead who was guarding his master's house said to Lionel.

"You're a gallant little gentleman. God bless you."

And he stooped to kiss the Royalist child, as he stood leaning on his father's sword.

Soon the officer gave the word to start, and Lionel waved his feathered hat to tearful Bridget and cried—

"Don't forget Lionel, will you? And don't love him less because he goes to serve his king."

And then turning to his mother, he said—

"Mother darling, last night I dreamed that father smiled in his sleep when I bent over him and told him that you and I were going to our king. I know he is pleased with us, for he smiled so brightly."

WHAT ARE METEORS?

It is now known that meteors cannot originate within the regions of the earth's atmosphere. It is also universally conceded by all observers of natural phenomena that innumerable minute bodies fill celestial space, moving round the sun in every possible kind of orbit.

Of the exact nature of these small bodies comparatively little can be known, but it is certain that our earth is continually encountering them in its passage through its orbit.

They are burned in passing through the upper regions of our atmosphere, and the shooting star is simply the light of that burning. The question how they can be burned so quickly and with so intense a light puzzled astronomers until it was seen that these phenomena could be fully accounted for by the mechanical theory of heat.

It is now established that heat is only a certain form of motion: that hot air differs from cold air only in a more rapid vibration of its molecules; and that it communicates heat to other bodies simply by striking them with its molecules, and thus setting their molecules in vibration.

An exact measure has been found for this increase of heat—a velocity of 135 feet per second being shown to increase the temperature one degree, and higher velocities increasing the temperature in proportion to the square of the velocity.

Heat, for example, is increased four degrees with a velocity of 250 feet, sixteen degrees with one of 500 feet per second, and so on.

To find the heat to which a meteor is exposed in moving through our atmosphere, we divide its velocity in feet per second by 125; the square of the quotient will give the temperature in degrees.

Now, the earth moves in its orbit at the rate of 98 000 feet per second; and if it met a meteor at rest, this velocity would create a rise in temperature corresponding to about 600 000 degrees, which largely exceeds any temperature that can be created on the earth, even by artificial means.

It cannot be said that the meteors are actually heated up to this temperature, but the air acts upon them as if it were heated to this point—that is, it burns them instantaneously with an enormous evolution of light and heat, just as a furnace would if heated to a temperature of several thousand degrees.

Nor are the light and heat of ordinary burning even to be mentioned in comparison with the fusing temperature, the intense blaze which such heat would create in the hardest and most non-combustible substance in nature. Now, if the meteor be so small and fusible that this heat can act upon it instantaneously, it is all dissipated in the upper regions of the atmosphere, and we have simply a shooting star or brilliant meteor.

But sometimes these bodies are so large and firm that the heat has not had time to penetrate into their interior, but spends itself in melting and volatilising the outer portions. The body then passes through the atmosphere and falls upon the earth as an aerolite, or meteoric stone. Sometimes when the body strikes the denser part of our atmosphere, the resistance is so great that the aerolite is broken to pieces with great violence and a tremendous detonation.

This is usually spoken of as an explosion, but there is good reason to believe that the loud sound and bursting of the stone are both due to its striking the rapidly moving air with an enormous velocity of its own.

A LESSON IN ECONOMY.

Sit down on the porch, children, and let me tell you about Aunt Rachel and the story she once told me.

One day, when I was about twelve years old, I had planned to go after strawberries; but Aunt Rachel said to me, "A girl of your age should begin to learn how to do housework. Take off your hat, roll up your sleeves, and help me do the baking."

I pouted and sighed and shed tears, but was encouraged by the promise that I might go after the baking. Under good Aunt Rachel's directions I mixed a big loaf of bread, placed it on a tin as bright as a new dollar, and was rubbing the flour off my hands when she called out, "This will never, never do, child; you haven't scraped your bread-bowl clean."

I shall never forget the picture she made standing there, her eyes regarding me sternly, one hand resting on her hip, while in the other she held the untidy bowl.

"It will never do, child," she went on. "It is not only untidy, but it makes too much waste; to be a good housekeeper, you must learn to be economical. You have heard the story of the young man who wanted an economical wife?"

"No," I answered, and I might have added that I didn't wish to hear it, either.

"Well," she continued, "he was a very likely young man, and he wanted a careful wife; so he thought of a way he could find out. One morning he went to call upon the different girls of his acquaintance, and asked them each for the scrapings of their bread-bowls to feed his horses. You see they all wanted him, so they got all they could for him. Finally, he found a girl who hadn't any, so he asked her to be his wife, because he thought she must be economical. Now," said Aunt Rachel, triumphantly, "suppose a young man should ask you for the scrapings of your bread-bowl, what would you say?"

"What would I say?" I repeated scornfully; "why, I'd tell him if he couldn't afford to buy oats for his horses they might starve. I wouldn't rob the pig to feed them."

I suppose Aunt Rachel thought that lesson was all lost on me; but as true as you live, I never knead the bread to this day without thinking of her lesson in economy.

BIRTHDAYS IN GERMANY.—An important matter in a German household is the birthday. Nothing seems to give more pleasure than in celebrating one. The birthday of one of the housekeeping young ladies was in June.

The night before a note came addressed to the lady of the house, from her home. Upon going downstairs at seven the next morning, we were surprised to see no appearance of coffee, so, opening the glass doors, went into the garden, where a gay scene presented itself.

A large arbor was hung with garlands and white curtains, and in the centre was a table covered with white, on which were spread the presents, and a huge round cake occupied the place of honor, surrounded by a wreath of flowers; and in the middle a lighted candle was burning. Outside were two smaller tables, with coffee, cake, etc., standing around which was a large party talking and laughing. Upon seeing us approach they came forward to wish us a good morning and enjoy our looks of surprise.

The birthday child (a substantial maiden of twenty-one) advanced blushing, with a wreath of flowers on her head. The young ladies of the house had been up early decorating the arbor, and making things as homelike as possible for her on her birthday. The winter birthdays were equally interesting. That of the lady of the house was then, and the sitting-room was adorned with branches of trees from the woods, and wreaths surrounded the tables laid out with presents. One table was devoted to useful articles, such as pots, pans, etc., and these also were surrounded by garlands! At 4 company began to arrive, but with no invitation, although preparations in the way of coffee and supper had been made for above twenty, and it is a great disappointment if friends fail to appear.

"I DON'T know whether I ought to help you or not," said the lady dubiously; "you look like a drinking man." "I give you my word, ma'am," said the melancholy but intelligent tramp, "I was driv into bankrup'cy by keepin' a temperance hotel. It didn't pay, but I went cheerfully to ruin rather than sacrifice my principles. Thank ye, ma'am. Them's the finest-lookin' tarts and cookies I've had this summer."

NO MORE.

BY C. L.

The dream is over, and I stand
  Alone upon the wave-kiss'd shore,
My heart is lone—empty each hand,
  My love comes here no more!

Oh, bush! ye waves dance not in play,
  When I am wailing sadly here;
Ye breezes, pass upon your way,
  There is no pastime here.

The heavy-lidded dear gray eyes
  Look no more love-bound into mine,
And all my soul uplifted cries
  For her dear self divine.

The slender, gracious, yielding form,
  Will lie no more in my embrace,
And no more shall my kisses warm
  Rest on her splendid face.

O, love—lost love! the world shall know
  No more of this unfinish'd tale,
It shall not taunt with laughter low
  Because I chance to fail.

And so I stand alone and mute
  Upon the bare forsaken shore,
And broken is Love's fairy lute,
  I hear its notes no more!

ABOUT TRUE FAME.

"And this is fame!" is reported to have exclaimed a well-known politician, when he heard that a letter addressed to him had been returned to the sender, through the Dead Letter Office, owing to the address being rather illegible.

He evidently thought that everybody would be familiar with his name, address and social standing. Life's grooves are indeed narrow; and a man has to achieve a great deal, and keep his name before the public many years before he is known to "the general."

A "society" woman, at whose table Longfellow was dining, asked him, "Oh, Mr. Longfellow, have you ever published a book?" This was after two-thirds of his lifework was done.

Hawthorne says that in his later years he met many people who knew him well as the ex-surveyor of the port of Salem, but who never knew that he had written anything, and had not even heard that there was such a book as "The Scarlet Letter."

One day a gentleman went into a barber's shop as Dr. Holmes was going out. "Do you know who that was that just went out?" asked the barber. Being curious to see what account of Dr. Holmes the barber would give, the visitor shook his head. "Why," said the barber, "that's old Dr. Holmes." "And who is Dr. Holmes?" "Oh, he's been a doctor here a great many years. I believe he ain't practicin' any more, but he's thought a good deal of."

Greatness is paid homage to by some people in very peculiar ways. Everybody must remember the story told in connection with Victor Hugo.

The great poet was startled one morning by the intrusion of three Englishmen. "Victor Hugo," said one, consulting a pocket-book. The poet bowed, thinking he should be asked for his autograph next. After the visitors had stared for a few seconds, the pocket-book was again opened. "Eleven o'clock: the lions!" Then the party bowed, and walked out of the room.

Truly, the penalties of fame are many, as Emerson doubtless came to the conclusion on at least one memorable occasion. The philosopher was on the way to this city several years ago, when he fell in with a chatty and agreeable gentleman named Sackett, who told Emerson that he resided in San Francisco.

This was all he said about himself; but from his conversation Emerson judged that his acquaintance was a man of standing and intelligence, and ultimately agreed to dine with Mr. Sackett upon their arrival in San Francisco. The next morning Emerson was astounded to find in the local papers the following "personal" paragraph:

"Professor Ralph Waldo Emerson, the eminent philosopher, scholar, and poet, is in our city as the guest of Mr. H. T. Sackett, the well-known proprietor of the Bust Street Dime Museum. Matinees every half-hour: admission only ten cents. The Double-headed Calf and the Dog faced Boy this week!"

Scott had several experiences of the penalties of greatness, notably in the case of a female admirer who sent him the manuscript of a tragedy, requesting him to revise it.

Imagine Scott's feelings on his discovering that he had to pay twenty-five dollars for postage on this precious packet; and his dismay at receiving, several days later, another copy of the play from the same lady, who, being afraid that the original copy of her tragedy might be lost in transit, had taken the precaution of sending a duplicate, for which Scott had to pay another twenty-five dollars.

If the pleasure arising from fame could be accurately gauged, it would be found that unconventional acts of kindness, and simple though sincere compliments, give more pleasure to their recipients than the loudest blare of trumpets or the most eloquent panegyrics.

The observation of a well-known writer on receiving a present of a dozen bottles of brandy from an anonymous admirer of his genius is well known. "This," he said, "is true fame."

The highest honor that Uhland, the Prussian poet, received was a very humble gift. The Prussian king, Frederick-William IV., offered him the Order Pour le Merite, with flattering expressions of royal regard, but Uhland, who was essentially a poet of the people, declined to accept it.

While explaining to his wife the reason which moved him to refuse the distinction, a working-girl from the neighborhood entered, and, presenting Uhland with a bunch violets, said:

"This is an offering from my mother!" "Your mother, child!" replied the poet; "I thought she died last autumn?" "That is true, Herr Uhland," said the girl; "and I begged you at the time to make a little verse for her grave, and you sent me a beautiful poem. These are the first violets which have bloomed on mother's grave; I have plucked them, and I like to think she sends them to you with her greetings."

The poet's eyes moistened as he took the posy, and putting it in his buttonhole, he said to his wife: "There, dear woman! is not that an Order more valuable than any king can give?"

Of late years several literary men have been fortunate. Professor Huxley found a check for twenty thousand dollars in one of his morning letters—the bequest of a Bolton admirer. Charles Reade was remembered in the wills of more than one admirer.

These generous recognitions of genius are, however, trifling in comparison with the offer of a millionaire to Martin Tupper, of "Proverbial Philosophy" fame.

"I am one of the richest men in New York," he said to the author, "and I know authors must be poor. I like your books, and have told my bankers"—naming them—"to honor any checks on me you may like to draw;" and when the offer was declined, the millionaire's house, his yacht, and his carriage were placed at Mr. Tupper's disposal.

Gifts such as these, and unconventional compliments go a long way towards constituting real fame.

Grains of Gold.

Magnificent promises are always to be suspected.

Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm.

The road is long from the intention to the completion.

The way to gain a good reputation is to endeavor to be what you desire to appear.

An affected man proclaims his own deficiencies, tells what he desires and yet lacks.

More helpful than all wisdom is one draught of simple human pity that will not forsake us.

The affectation of learning is pedantry; of virtue, prudery; of honesty, hypocrisy; of piety, cant.

Truth is a queen who has her eternal throne in heaven, and her seat of empire in the heart of God.

Nobody can give you wiser advice than self; you will never err if you listen to your own suggestions.

If sensuality were happiness beasts were happier than men; but human felicity is lodged in the soul, not in the flesh.

Prosperity is the touchstone of virtue; for it is less difficult to bear misfortunes than to remain uncorrupted by pleasure.

One of the most effectual ways of pleasing and of making one's self beloved, is to be cheerful; joy softens more hearts than tears.

Truth is a gem that is found at a great depth; whilst on the surface of this world all things are weighed by the false scale of custom.

Femininities.

Glycerine does not agree with a very dry skin.

Tiny silver acorns are the newest fad in bonnet pins.

If you use powder, always wash it off before going to bed.

The Woman's Tricycle Club of Washington, D. C., has 70 members.

Ice can easily be broken into bits by using a needle or pin and gently pounding it.

Virtue is everwhere the same, because it comes from God, while everything else is of man.

Mrs. Parvenu says her new house has all the modern conveniences, even rheumatic tubes.

Virtue and vice are both prophets; the first, of certain good; the second, of pain or else penitence.

It would not be surprising if some society women were to set apart a day upon which to receive their children.

One of the fashionable shades this year is called "putty." It matches the head of the fashionable young lady's escort first rate.

There never was a woman yet who ever bought a box of berries from a hawker without calling from the window, "Are they good?"

To mend small holes in plastering use one part plaster-of-paris and three parts fine sand; mix with cold water and apply with a case-knife.

Old lady, stopping open street car: "Ye don't allow no smokin' on this car, do ye?" Conductor: "Certainly, madam; take one of the back seats."

A parrot owned in a suburb of Chicago hangs out in front of its owner's house. Whenever a young lady and her beau are passing it shouts, "Papa, papa!"

Mrs. De Society: "What a lovely baby that is we just passed!" Mrs. De Fashion: "Yes; it is mine." "Indeed!" "Oh, I am sure of it, I recognized the nurse."

In wedding rings the demand is now for a narrow, high centre band, with almost round edges. The flatter and wider rings are still sold, but the new style is becoming very popular.

"Oh, Mrs. Brown, do please introduce Mr. Jones over there to me!" "It's no good, dear, he won't dance." "No, I know; but I want to sit out with him; he goes with my dress so beautifully."

Two ladies having got into a quarrel, one of them said, with a toss of her head: "I never betrayed a friend's confidence!" "Very true; because you were never intrusted with it!" retorted the other.

A Connecticut girl has almost paid her way through college by sewing on shoe buttons for her mates. She charges 10 cents an hour and devotes 2 hours a day to her trade. Few young men in the same position have helped themselves that much.

There are three American ladies who are not obliged to skip over to the postoffice for stamps every time they write a letter. Mrs. Polk, Mrs. Garfield and Mrs. Grant are the fortunate three, the Government having given them the franking privilege.

Fashionable lady, coming out of church: "What a powerful sermon; I was never before so impressed with the duty and privilege of giving freely. I am determined to do better, and to send this very week another black silk dress to my daughter."

Breathless young lady, just arrived at station, accompanied by lady friends: "Will I have time to say good-bye to my friends before the train leaves?" Porter: "Yes, miss." "How fortunate! How soon does it start?" "In about three hours, miss."

At Saratoga they tell of a guest who sent down word that she did not feel well enough to go down to lunch, and asked that something be sent up to her; this was done and shortly afterward she appeared in person, carrying the tray and asking for "more."

"Miss Clara," he said, tremulously, "I want to tell you—er—the old, old story—" and then for a moment his agitation got the better of him. "Go on, George," said the girl, with shy encouragement, "never mind if it is a chestnut; perhaps I've never heard it before."

Empress Eugenie will present the Princess Letitia Bonaparte, as a wedding gift, with the fan which the dead Prince Imperial gave to his mother on her birthday in 1874. On this fan is the first drawing which the Prince Imperial made, surrounded with precious stones costing over $100,000.

A clergyman in one of the Bahama Islands proposed that the service be shortened for the convenience of his parishioners. A day or so after he received this protest from a Creole of his congregation: "Indeed, sir, our ladies will never think it worth while to dress only to sit in church for one hour."

At one of the schools for negroes in the South the girls learn housekeeping practically by being placed four at a time and for a month at a time in a cottage, where they live and have complete control, under the oversight of a matron. They keep strict account of their expenditures, practice economy, and sweep, cook, wash and iron.

Mr. Waldo: "Your friend, Miss Wabash, is a very pleasant young lady." Miss Breezy, of Chicago: "Yes, Clara certainly is. She is a person of innate culture and refinement, and indubitably adorns the sphere in which she moves." Mr. Waldo: "But she is rather plain." Miss Breezy: "Ye-es; Clara will never be hung for her beauty."

Old gentleman, to daughter: "And so you have promised to marry young Sampson?" Daughter: "Yes, papa, and the day is set, and the minister selected, and we are to go to Europe." Old gentleman, timidly: "My dear, I have a great favor to ask of you." Daughter. "What is it, papa?" Old gentleman: "If I'm not asking too much, would you mind sending me cards to the wedding, my child?"

Masculinities.

People who never have any time are the people who do least.

About as dangerous a net as a fellow can fall in with is a brunette.

When a young man is walking with his girl he forgets all the short cuts.

It is vain to be always looking towards the future and never acting towards it.

It is perfectly proper to carve out your own fortune, but you should not chisel other people in doing it.

Think not a trifle though it small appear; small sands the mountains, moments make the year, and trifles life.

To have a respect for ourselves guides our morals; and to have a deference for others governs our manners.

I have ever held it as a maxim never to do that through another which it was possible for me to execute myself.

"Misfortunes never come singly," remarked Jones, when a young man sat down to play the accompaniment to his own song.

Awkwardness is a more real disadvantage than it is generally thought to be; it often occasions ridicule, it always lessens dignity.

There are braying men in the world as well as braying asses; for what is loud and senseless talking and swearing other than braying?

Little Minnie: "Oh, mama, what is that dreadful noise upstairs?" Mama: "Hush, darling; it's papa trying to save the price of a shave."

A strong minded woman's sneer. What in a woman is called "curiosity," in a man is grandiloquently magnified into the "spirit of inquiry."

Bolton: "Young Jones is very generous with his cigars, isn't he?" Brown: "Yes (puff); but I think he would (puff) be kinder to his friends if he smoked them himself."

If a man only thinks he has another match in his pocket he can light a cigar in a gale, but if he is dead sure that he hasn't, the one he has lit will go out on him as sure as fate.

A romantic individual was asked the other day why he showed greater attachment to a very thin lady than to one who was more stout. "It is," said he, "because I am nearer her heart."

Young Stayer, at 11.55 P. M.: "What a charming song that was! I wish you would repeat it. What is it called?" Miss Bored: "I chose it because I thought it might be new to you. It's entitled 'Going.'"

"Bridget, has Johnnie come home from school yet?" "Yis, ma'am." "Have you seen him?" "No, ma'am." "Then how do you know he's home?" "'Cause the cat's hidin' under the stove, ma'am."

"Good bye, wifey; if I'm detained by business, and not able to come home to dinner, I'll send you a telegram." Wife, frigidly: "You needn't take that trouble. Here it is. I took it out of your pocket a while ago."

"Ma," said baby at the supper-table, "I know why this cake is called angel cake." "Do you?" replied his mother, without much interest. "Yes; it's because it's made by an angel. That's what pa told the cook."

Groom, to bride—they are waiting for the minister: "Hadn't I better skip out and see what is the matter, my dear? The minister should have been here 20 minutes ago." Bride: "No, George; you stay right where you are."

"Now, John," said his wife, as she was about starting for the country, "be very careful about drinking ice water." "Maria," he responded, reassuringly but unthinkingly, "I won't drink a drop of water while you're gone."

Wife: "John, dear, what would you do if I were to die?" Husband: "Don't speak of such a thing. I would be desperate." Wife: "Do you think you would marry again?" Husband: "Well, n-no; I don't think I would be so desperate as all that."

Whoever would live his life over again that he might live a better life would do well to remember that he would do no better than he is now doing. If you want to begin over again begin now, and don't think to order a new cradle and begin being baby over again.

Bobby, whose uncle has given him a dollar: "I wish you would give me a nickel, Uncle James, instead of a dollar." Uncle James, astonished: "But, Bobby, a dollar is better than a nickel." Bobby: "That's the trouble; if it's a dollar, pa'll want it; if it's only a nickel I can have it."

John Adams, his son John Quincy, and Martin Van Buren were the shortest of our Presidents, and they stood 5 feet 6 inches. Harrison drops one inch under this. Polk was 5 feet 9, and Pierce 5 feet 10. All the rest from Washington to Grant were 6 feet or over. Grant was 5 feet 8, and the Presidents since his time all exceed his stature.

The Pope has not disposed of two divisions of his jubilee presents—the wine and slippers. The first, which forms a total of 100,000 bottles, will probably be given to hospitals; but it is difficult to see what will become of the slippers. There are 30,000 pairs, which are certain to be on his Holiness' hands, as they are such slippers as only a Pope can wear.

"Well, John," said old Jordan to his young friend, "you have just married, I hear." "Yes, sir," he answered, with a spring morning smile; "just a month ago, and I want you to come up to dinner with me to-day." "Have you a cook?" "No." "Well, my boy, s'p'ose we go to a restaurant this time. You must remember I had a young wife once myself."

"Do you know Cufferdope?" inquired a friend of old Bondclipper. "Know him by sight." "What's his business?" "Don't exactly know. I believe they call him a civilized engineer." "Is he well off?" "They say he's as rich as Croesote." "Do you know where he lives?" "Don't know the number; he's on the next street running parallel with this one." "Thank you." "Not at all."

Recent Book Issues.

"From 18 to 20," a novel, is in the autobiographical style and embodies the usual incidents of a debutante over whom the masculines rave: a German, two lovers, one madly jealous, papa reduced from affluence to penury, a hurried engagement, the old time death-bed betrothal, and finally, a night in a cave from which the heroine is rescued. It is an innocent and harmless book. Lippincott & Co., publishers.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

An interesting and valuable study of the career of Roscoe Conkling is the opening article in the August *Magazine of American History*. The editor contributes a readable sketch, "Philadelphia in 1750," and Hon. Charles K. Tuckerman gives "Personal Recollections of General Grant." "The Conquest of the Mayas" is the fourth and concluding paper in the charming historical sketches of Yucatan. "Incidents of Border Life in Ohio" is a short but well-told story of early hardships. There is another chapter from the "Englishman's Pocket Note-Book in 1828." The "Journal of Lieutenant Tjerck Beekman, 1779," is a document of special value. Then comes an illustrated chapter of Washingtonia. Minor Topics and Original Documents this month contain an unusual number of short readable articles. The Notes furnish curious data, and the editorial and other departments abound in good material. Published at 743 Broadway, New York.

The contents of the August number of the *Eclectic Magazine* are marked by many excellent and attractive papers on a variety of subjects. "The Eighty-eighth," relates to the tercentenary of the Destruction of the Spanish Armada. Algernon Charles Swinburne contributes a paper on "Mr. Whistler's Art Theories." The discussion of the Sunday Question, by the Bishop of Ripon, upholds the strictly religious view. Dr. Aubrey's "Social Problems in America" is a thoughtful and able paper. Among the other articles are, "How to Grow Great Men," by Prof. Freeman; "Women in the Labor Market," by Christian Bremner; a sketch on M. Pasteur, by Mrs. Priestley; "About Two Great Novelists"—Dickens and Thackeray—by Herman Merivale; "The Revival of Architecture," "French Political Women, Schopenhauer," "The Gold Mines of Phrygia," and a number of excellent minor articles, poems, etc. E.R. Pelton, publisher, New York.

The *Forum* for August contains an analysis of the British and American Governments, by Judge James M. Love. The Second of the economic articles by Edward Atkinson, is "Must Humanity Starve at Last?" The eminent French physician and specialist, Dr. Charcot, writes of "The Topography of the Brain." Geo. W. Cable contributes an open letter to the freedmen, entitled "What Shall the Negro Do?" Representative William D. Kelley has an extensive political article. The railroad question is discussed by George R. Blanchard, President of the National Traffic Association. The Rev. John Snyder, of St. Louis, protests in the name of Christianity and civilization against our funeral customs. The Mormon side of the Utah question is presented by Charles W. Penrose, editor of the leading Mormon Paper. The educational article this month is "What Shall the Public Schools Teach?" The Rev. Leonard W. Bacon attacks the faith-cure delusion, and Dr. Felix L. Oswald discusses "Is Longevity Worth its Price?" The Forum Publishing Co., 253 Fifth avenue, New York.

The Popular Science Monthly for August opens with an article entitled "The Octroi at Iaccire; a City Made Rich by Taxation," by President Jordan, of the University of Indiana, which gives the imaginary history of a French town that sought prosperity through a high tariff. There are two illustrated articles in this number: "The Home of the Great Auk," and "Ainu Houses and Their Furnishing." Herbert Spencer contributes a paper on "The Ethics of Kant." Natural history is represented by "Mosses and Their Water Supply," and "Something About Snakes." A doctor calls attention to some "Injurious Influences of City Life.' There is a vigorous and practical article on "Teaching Physiology in the Public Schools." The other articles are, "The Unity of Science," "Drift-Sands and Their Formations," and "The Future of the Negro." Prof. Spencer F. Baird is the scientific man of whom a sketch and portrait are given. The "Editor's Table" contains some good suggestions. D. Appleton & Co., publishers, New York.

THEY were on their bridal tour, and she said gayly: "Now, Fred, we don't want everybody in the car to know that we are newly married and have them all staring at us. Let us act like real old married people. It'll be such jolly fun." "All right," said Fred calmly. "You let me have that end of the seat; it's lots pleasanter than this. I'll take the pillow, too, and I guess I'll go to sleep for three or four hours. You waken me when we come to the dinner station. Spread that shawl over me, and——" "Oh, I don't care who knows we're just married," she said. "Sit where you are, dear, and hold my hand."

LIFE is before you—not earthly life alone, but life, a thread running interminably through the warp of eternity.

Pozzoni's Complexion Powder produces soft and beautiful skin; it combines every element of beauty and purity.

HOW KID GLOVES ARE MADE.

AT what period of the world's history people began to clothe their hands in gloves is a question difficult to answer; but probably the earliest mention of such article of attire is that in Genesis, where the mother of Jacob covered the boy's hand with the hairy skin of the goat in order that he might deceive his father. At a later date Homer sings about them, and mention of them often occurs in Shakespeare.

Gloves have been made, and indeed are now made of many materials to suit the caprices of fashion; but kid gloves have for many years been most in favor, and—at least for some time to come—are not likely to be superseded.

The manufacture of these articles is to be found chiefly in France. Kid gloves are made, to a smaller extent, in England and Germany, but those of the best quality are usually manufactured in France. How manifold are the operations which are necessary to produce the kid covering of the hand, few people have any idea. In all there are 219 separate processes before the raw skin is converted into the kid glove

The first thing to do, is of course, to remove the hair from the raw skins, and for this purpose lime is used, they being immersed from a fortnight to three weeks in pits containing water and lime. The skins are constantly turned and shifted about by workmen armed with long iron tongs, and when taken out it is found that the lime has loosened the cuticle of the skin, thus rendering the removal of the hair a more easy matter.

From the lime-pits the skins are taken to the unhairing room where they are stretched on a sort of wooden block, and scraped with a blunt two-handled knife. This removes the hair.

They are now taken in hand by the "flesher," who cuts off the tail, the headpiece, and such portions of adipose matter as may still adhere to the skin. This waste is very useful for the manufacture of glue and gelatine, the hair removed by the former process being used for mortar and for felt-making.

The skins now pass on to the "scudder," who removes any hair that may have hitherto escaped the knives of the previous operators. They are next left to soak in clear water, to remove all traces of the lime, and from there undergo a process of artificial fermentation.

Kid skins are not tanned like ordinary leather, such as is used for making boots or harness, by means of oak-bark, but are immersed in a large revolving "drum," which contains a mixture composed of yolk of eggs, wheaten flour, alum, and salt; and so enormous is the consumption of the former ingredient that at one factory no fewer than 4,000 eggs are needed every day.

The skins are allowed to remain in this costly paste for rather more than an hour, the drum being kept revolving by means of machinery.

They are next taken out, and removed to the cellars for the night, and from thence are conveyed on the following day to the drying room, where they are subjected to a temperature varying from 140 to 160 degrees. Each skin is hung separately on hooks, and thus they dry very quickly.

This process leaves them somewhat hard, and they are next "seasoned" or "sammied" with cold water; and then stretched backwards and forwards over an upright knife, shaped like a half-moon.

After being wetted again they are "shaved," a process requiring great dexterity. This is accomplished by means of specially constructed knives, which remove the under-flesh. The skins are now coated with a composition of flour, oil, and yolk of eggs, which makes them soft and pliable. They are then conveyed to the dye-house, being by this time ready for the preliminary operations of dyeing.

Before being dyed the skins are now trodden under foot for several hours in water. This process throws out of them anything which would be opposed to the action of the dye. Having been rinsed, the skins are now moistened with more yolk of eggs, and are allowed to rest a day before they are dyed by the workmen, who, taking a brush dipped in ammonia, spread it over the skin and then apply several coatings of the dye.

The skins, having been dried and dyed, are now subjected to a process known as "grounding," the object of which is to remove all roughness and render them thinner and more supple. They are next sorted according to their quality and size, and are passed on to the cutters, who cut them into the several detached parts of gloves.

This operation may seem to the unskilled very easy, but it requires, great judgment, for the workman has to allow for the natural "stretch" of the skin. The finished skins having been selected and mapped out by the sorters, and pieced out by the cutters are put over a frame looking like a deformed glove.

These frames are so made that they represent the whole glove laid out unsewn. The gloves, with the thumbs duly fitted and put together, are placed in a press, after which they are sent to be punched by means of machinery.

The edges of the gloves are refolded by machinery and are then ready for sewing. In France the work of stitching is done chiefly by hand, although there are some very ingenious machines invented to perform this operation. One firm alone employs no fewer than 4,500 women and girls for this branch.

The fastenings are now attached by means of rivets, which are hammered on by girls. The glove has now been sewn, and furnished with buttons. It only remains to straighten it by placing it on a glove-stick. They are then arranged in dozens, and being enveloped in paper bands, are packed in card boxes ready to be despatched from the factory.

EDUCATION IN CHINA.

Confucius was born in the province of Shan-Tung, the department of Yin-chau, B. C. 551. His family name was Kung, and his most commonly used given name Kong-Ni. He was generally called by his disciples Kung-Fu-Ta, the Teacher King.

The title Latinized by the Jesuit Missionaries, gives us the word Confucius, which has now become current among Western nations. His parents were respectable but poor. He manifested a taste for study when very young and became a teacher at the age of twenty-two. His character as a learned man soon drew toward him a large number of admiring and devoted disciples.

Much of his long life was spent in journeying from province to province vainly endeavoring to reform the abuses of the times, giving instructions to his followers and prosecuting his studies. The ultimate object of Confucius' teaching is the promotion of good government and the instruction of his disciples relates principally to the preparations for successfully influencing and controlling others.

He did not seek this end by devising the best code of laws for restraining the inhabitants of the empire, but by pointing out rules and principles for self-government and culture. He relied on moral and not physical force, on example and instruction rather than punishment. He believed that if the rulers would cultivate virtue, the people would revere, obey and imitate them.

His beautiful, though Utopian conception of a perfect government, was one in which the ruler sways the minds of his people by illustrating in his own person the perfection of virtue and thus sits still and looks abroad upon a peaceful and happy state.

In addition to the failure of Confucius to live up to his standard of sincerity, which has been referred to above, it is further to be regretted that in adopting the views and following the example of those who preceded him he sanctioned and encouraged the worship of gods and ancestors.

The manner in which the schools are conducted is peculiar and worthy of special notice. The text-books are the Chinese classics, or elementary and preparatory books for beginners. There is no occasion for the complaint so often heard with us that the teacher wishes to introduce a new book, for theirs are nearly all 2,000 years old, and few have any idea of their being changed for the next 2,000 years.

These books are all written in the book language, as different from the vernacular as Latin is from English. Every word in this written language has its independent and arbitrary representative and symbol, so that there are as many different characters as there are words. The whole number of characters in the imperial dictionary of Emperor Kang-Hi which is complete in six large volumes is about 40,000.

The beginner then, instead of learning an alphabet, as with us, commences to learn these characters or words separately, each of which has its own sound and name without any reference to its meaning. At first there are ten to learn in a day more or less. By degrees the pupil becomes familiar with them by memorizing them. Afterward he receives the meaning.

There are about thirty scholars in a class with one male teacher in charge. Another feature which is still more singular, is that the pupils study out loud and all separately without being organized into classes. Each scholar shouts his lesson out from his desk at the top of his voice over and over until he can repeat it and recite it with his back to the teacher. They have as their books three primers, sixteen readers and twelve grammars. Graduates in grammar spend nearly the best part of their lives at school. If they want a first class education, they continue their study through from thirty to fifty years.

Their plan of going to school is to be present at seven o'clock in the morning. They have breakfast about half-past nine, when there is a short intermission for refreshments. They return to school at eleven A. M. and the time is devoted to penmanship. Close at twelve noon there is a one hour recess, and at one P.M. they go on with their studies. At three P.M. there is one hour intermission. The schoolday ends at six P.M.

They have a summer vacation of six days, commencing on the 15th of August, and a Christmas holiday in the month of December. When boys reach the age of twelve or fourteen they commence writing literary compositions. The essays are a kind of literary mosaic, composed of historical references, allusions and hints, poetical, biographical and historical. A fine hand is much admired, and as the characters are very numerous and some of them very elaborate, it is common for persons to employ a portion of the time during their whole life in improving their penmanship.

ONE good act done to-day is worth a thousand in contemplation for a future time.

LOG CABINS were, in the Harrison-Tippecanoe campaign of 1840, erected in the large cities and villages, and used for holding political meetings. Barrels of hard cider were placed in front of the cabins, and the "Log Cabin hard-cider campaign of '40" has passed into history as the most enthusiastic of our political contests. Log Cabins have for this reason a permanent place in American history. Warner's Log Cabin Remedies and "Tippecanoe" tonic bitters have secured a permanent place because of their excellence.

A WEAPON AND SHIELD.

In China fans formerly were part of the emblems of imperial authority. In Japan they were, and in a measure continue to be, indispensable to the lowest as well as the highest classes.

There is rather a curious tradition about the manner in which the fan was introduced into China. A certain princess of that country, beautiful as the lovely lady to whom Aladdin lost his heart at first sight, was assisting at the feasts of lanterns, wearing as customary a mask which concealed her whole face, and was so much oppressed by the heat as to be unable any longer to endure so close-fitting a screen.

Accordingly she took it off, and in order still to guard her features from the gaze of rude and admiring manhood, moved it quickly in front of them, thereby simultaneously hiding her charms and cooling her heated brow.

This ingenious device was observed, admired and imitated, and within a few minutes 10,000 masks were flourishing in front of as many female faces. The transition from a paper mask to a less awkward fan was then so obvious and easy that from that day fans became the rage throughout the celestial empire.

In Japan a variety of ceremonies and uses have been invented for the fan besides those to which it was originally assigned. The lady who gives alms to a beggar presents it to him invariably on the end of a fan.

When a criminal is doomed to die a fan is broken and thrown down at his feet, and as the wretch stoops down to pick up the fragments his head is taken off with one clever and sweeping stroke of the executioner's sword. In conversation, if a note or memorandum has to be made, it is jotted down on the instant on the ever-ready fan. A Japanese lady who may go to a ball has no need whatever of an engagement card—she can write her partners' names on her fan.

An illustrated history of fans from the earliest antiquity would undoubtedly form a curious chapter in the annals of fashion. It is believed that the use of the fan, in one shape or another, was spontaneously adopted in all parts of the world.

The Hebrews knew the use of fans. It is just possible that during their residence in Egypt they naturalized this appliance of luxury in that country. They were used by the Pharaohs as standards in battle and in time of peace for keeping the flies off the sacrificial offerings and cooling the brow of the priest-king as he performed the sacred functions of his office.

Fans appear also on the tombstones of Thebes, where paintings represent them as surrounding the Sovereign at his court.

In ancient Rome the fan was also used. Terence, the dramatist, who lived in the second century, B. C., makes one of his characters say: "Take this fan and give her thus a little air."

From Rome the fan made its tour through Europe. With the advance of luxury, feathers, jewels, ivory and the precious metals were pressed into its service. In the cathedral of Monza, in Italy, is still preserved the fan of Theolinda, who married the Lombard Antharis in 588 A. D.

WAGES NO OBJECT.—Woman (to tramp): "Can't ye get any work to do?" Tramp: "Yes, ma'am; I was offered a steady job by the old agricultural expert who lives just beyond the forks of the road." Woman: "That's Mr. Hayseed. What did he want you to do?" Tramp: "Ma'am, he wanted me to get up at four in the morning and milk seventeen cows, feed, water and rub down four horses, clean the stables and then saw wood until it was time to begin the day's work." Woman: "How much did he want to pay you?" Tramp: "I dunno; I didn't stop to ask."

THE Duchess de Luynes returned to her home in Paris the other day after a trip into the country and found her Italian waiting-maid strutting about arrayed in her mistress' best ball-dress. Before the Duchess could remonstrate another servant walked into the room, and, remarking that the millenium had come, began throwing bric-a-brac, albums and other ornamental articles out of the window. Both girls had gone stark mad. No one could find out why. They are in an asylum.

Wanamaker's.

PHILADELPHIA, July 30, 1888.

Closed Saturdays at 1 P. M.

THERE'S A STOREFUL OF HELPS TO MAKE THE Summer outing pleasant. You'll need them. Fresh air and country scenery don't entirely fill the bill.

Lightest and brightest of cottons; filmy woolens; exquisite Ceylon Flannels, with the strength of wool and the airiness of cotton. Or you can get the stuffs made up—often with a trifle or nothing to pay for the making.

Underwear, overwear, Easiest, daintiest footwear. Head rigging for roughing it or for show. And a score of little things you'll be sure to want when they're out of reach.

Including sporting gear.

COTTON STUFF PRICES ARE NEARLY ALL LOP-SIDED

50c Ginghams for 37½c.
27½c Sateens for 20c.
20c Challis for 12½c.
Spiderwebby Crapes 12½c.
Strong, fast-color Lawns, 5c.

WHAT APPEARS TO BE BY FAR THE MOST IMPORtant re-improvements in Suspenders comes to us from London as the new Captus Brace. For strength, simplicity and ease of unfastening it stands at the head. Adjusted with a touch. Leather and canvas ends. 75c, $1 and $1.25.

A postal card request for samples or goods is about as good as a personal visit.

JOHN WANAMAKER.

Humorous.

FAST FRIENDS.

The same in fine and fretful weather—
  Does Fortune smile or Fortune frown—
You'll always find these two together,
  The best of friends in all the town!

It is no brittle, brief affection;
  Their "chumship" dates from five years back,
And always wears the same complexion;
  What pleases Jimmy pleases Jack.

The "cash" they lend to one another
  Would many a Jew with envy fill;
The drinks they freely "stand" each other
  Proclaim their discord nearly nil.

And, reader, do you really wonder
  If such a friendship e'er could be?
Then let me tear the doubt asunder:
  They both have sisters!—now d'you see?

—U. N. Nonk.

Headquarters—A pillow.

The lost cause—A dead crow's.

Fancy work—Castles in the air.

Forced politeness—Bowing to necessity.

Hard thing to sharpen — The water's edge.

A singular fact—To-day will be yesterday to-morrow.

Even the bootblack says that his business is brightening up.

One swallow does not make a summer, but a great many of them may make a drunkard.

People call it "putting up" at an hotel because there is so much that they have to put up with.

You can't convince a young man whose girl has said "Yes," that this country is going to wreck and ruin.

It spoke well for her previous training. New servant, proceeding to pour out the champagne: "Say when."

A man with six or seven marriageable daughters says that his house is a regular court house every Sunday night.

Some one has asked, "Where do flies go in Winter?" We don't know, but we wish they would go there in Summer.

Teacher: "What advantage had the old Greeks over us, Hans?" Hans, drawing a long breath. "They did not have to learn Greek."

The Western editor who spoke of a fellow citizen as a "howling swell," and the types got it a "howling smell," is convalescent, but he will probably be a cripple for life.

"Yes," said a venal politician, "my political party has thrown me overboard, because they say I've no influence; but I'll show 'em that I've strength to swim to the other side."

Mrs. Parks: "Good gracious, Henry, what am I to do? I can't go to the concert to-night. Somebody has stolen my bustle!" Mr. Parks, indistinctly, with his mouth full of lather: "Take the bird cage."

"I know I've got a vein of poetry in me, sir," confidently asserted the young man to the editor, "and all I want is a chance to bring it out. What would you suggest, sir?" "I think you had better see a doctor and have it lanced."

Brown: "What's the matter, Uncle Rastus, you look sick?" Uncle Rastus: "Yes, sah; I ate er whole watermelyun larst night an' I ain't feelin' bery well dis mawnin'." "Are you going to see a doctor?" "No, sah; Ise gwine fo' anudder melyun."

At the seaside. Dorothy: "But, Herman, I can't answer you now. I—I—give me time to think before I reply." Herman, with rapturous passion: "Certainly, my own angel. But don't make it too long, because it costs me $5 a day at this beastly hotel."

Mamma: "What's the matter, precious? Mabel, you naughty child, what have you been doing to your poor little sister?" Mabel, virtuously and defiantly: "Nothing!" Mamma: "You have! I know you have!" Mabel: "I only told her she's got to die some day, and she says she won't."

"Two souls with but a single thought" is a rapturous enough sentiment in love, but it takes on an element of misery, to one soul at least, when the girl is wrapped up in visions of a beautiful present and the young man is engrossed in perplexing speculations how to raise the money to purchase it.

"Mamma," said a small boy the other day: "do little angels wear shoes and stockings in summer time?" "No, my son." "Do they go barefoot?" "Yes." "And do they stay out after sunset?" "I presume so." "Well, don't the stars tickle their feet when they twinkle?" The fond mother was nonplussed.

Young hostess, to Mr. Oldboy, a millionaire: "Will you have a glass of wine, Mr. Oldboy?" Mr. Oldboy, a rank Prohibitionist: "Thank you, madam, but I never drink anything." Young hostess, anxious to say the right thing, but somewhat flurried: "Is it possible! Why, you look like a drinking man, Mr. Oldboy."

There were two opposing lawyers. The lawyer for the defense was so severe upon the prosecutor that the latter rose and asked: "Does the learned counsel think me a fool?" The retort was prompt. "My friend wishes to know if I consider him a fool, and in reply to his question I can only say that I am not prepared to deny it."

"I say, Fred, lend me a dollar, will you?" A dollar bill is produced. The borrower looks at it a moment thoughtfully and then exclaims: "By the way, Fred, I just remembered that there are counterfeit one-dollar bills in circulation. To prevent mistake, suppose you take this back and lend me a two instead. Thanks! A fellow can never be too careful in money matters, you know. So long! See you later!"

Red and White.—The popular jest about the necessary contiguity of red-headed girls and white horses is by no means modern, though in its recent revival it has swept over the country as a novelty. Some of us remember that our grandfathers used jocularly to assert it to the wondering ears of youth as a well-attested fact. In all likelihood the saying took its origin in the old English game called sometimes the "game of the road," but more often "ups and downs," which is still a favorite among children and traveling salesmen in Great Britain.

One party takes the "up" side of the street or road, and the other the "down," counting one for every ordinary object and five for a white horse (a piebald counting as white) until a certain number agreed upon carries off the victory, but a red-headed woman or a donkey wins the game at once.

Another explanation refers the phrase to a North of Ireland superstition that the sight of a red-headed girl brings ill-luck to the beholder unless he retrace his steps to the starting point; but if he meets a white horse at any stage on his backward progress the spell is ipso facto averted. In the midland counties of England, on the other hand, it is ill-luck to meet a white horse without spitting at it.

In Waxford an odd cure for whooping cough is suggested by current superstition. The patient trudges along the road until he meets a piebald horse, and shouts out to the rider: "Hello, man on the piebald horse, what is good for the whooping cough?" and no matter how absurd the remedy suggested he will certainly be cured. In Scotland to dream of a white horse foretells the coming of a letter.

"Mr." and "Mrs."—In earlier times the ordinary man was simply William or John; that is to say, he had merely a Christian name without any kind of handle before it or surname after it. Some means of distinguishing one John or another William from another John or another William became necessary.

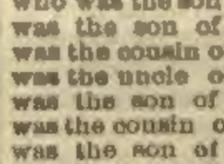
Nicknames derived from a man's trade, or from his dwelling-place, or from some personal peculiarity, were tacked on their Christian names, and plain John became Smith. As yet there were no "Misters" in the land.

Some John Smith accumulated more wealth than the bulk of his fellows—became, perhaps, a landed proprietor or an employer of labor. Then he began to be called in the Norman-French of the day the "Maistre" of this place or of that, of these workmen or of those.

In time the "Maistre" or "Maistre" as it soon became, got tacked on before his name, and he became Maister Smith and his wife became Maistress Smith. But gradually the sense of possession was lost sight of, and the title was conferred upon any man who had attained social distinction of any kind, whether by mere possession of wealth or by holding some position of more or less consideration and importance. It is only within comparatively modern times that the term came to be considered an almost indispensable adjunct to every one's name when mentioned in ordinary conversation or writing. Maistress Smith soon became Mistress Smith.

The Genealogy of a Queen.—Queen Victoria is the niece of William the Fourth, who was the brother of George the Fourth, who was the son of George the Third, who was the grandson of George the Second, who was the son of George the First, who was the cousin of Anne, who was the sister-in-law of William the Third, who was the son-in-law of James the Second, who was the brother of Charles the Second, who was the son of Charles the First, who was the son of James the First, who was the cousin of Elizabeth, who was the sister of Mary, who was the sister of Edward the Sixth, who was the son of Henry the Eighth, who was the son of Henry the Seventh, who was the cousin of Richard the Third, who was the uncle of Edward the Fifth, who was the son of Edward the Fourth, who was the cousin of Henry the Sixth, who was the son of Henry the Fifth, who was the son of Henry the Fourth, who was the cousin of Richard the Second, who was the grandson of Edward the Third, who was the son of Edward the Second, who was the son of Edward the First, who was the son of Henry the Third, who was the son of John, who was the brother of Richard the First, who was the son of Henry the Second, who was the cousin of Stephen, who was the cousin of Henry the First, who was the brother of William Rufus, who was the son of William the Conqueror 800 years ago.

Mistress—"Bridget, where is that picture of Psyche that belongs in the front parlor?" Bridget—"Och, it's meself, mum, that forgot to bring it back. I was fixin' me hair this mornin', an' I left it in me own room."



Log Cabins were the most prominent feature of the Presidential Campaign of 1840. At the opening of the campaign, the opposition sneeringly proclaimed "Tippecanoe" Harrison a low fellow, "born in a log cabin." His friends at once made the Log Cabin the emblem of the most enthusiastic of campaigns. Warner's Log Cabin Remedies and "Tippecanoe" stomach tonic are enthusiastically received by the American people to-day, because they are the remedies of the common people—simple but effective.

We saw a wealthy merchant recently, says a Boston paper, who wore the coat in which he was married, 25 years ago. In reply to the question as to the reason why he appeared in that particular garment, he said it was his mascot; that whenever he entered upon a new speculation, or made a new investment, or took any important step in domestic or business life, he had always donned that coat, and that its charm of luck had never yet deserted him.

It is not always boys who are ungrateful. It is sometime's the daughter's unkindness that is sharper than the serpent's tooth. A pretty miss on the train pettishly said to her mother: "Come on; you're always behind." A venerable gentleman passing stopped and said: "Never behind when you were sick, was she?"

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Mrs. De Saussure will be at her residence, as above, after September 1st, where she will be pleased to meet the parents of pupils who wish to apply for membership of her family.

Meanwhile she may be addressed care of Packer Collegiate Institute, Brooklyn, New York.

Mrs. De Saussure cites, by permission, the following

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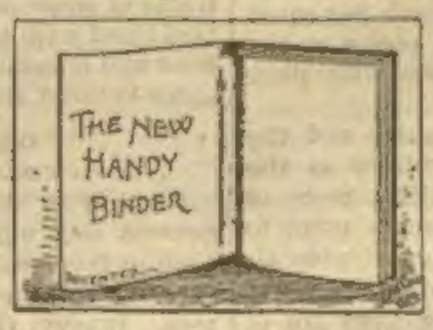

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Latest Fashion Phases.

A silk that washes like linen is a great desideratum both for lingerie and for dresses, and this has just been brought out.

Some years ago there was introduced a tussore colored material of the same kind, but now it is made of the purest white.

It literally does wash just like a piece of linen, and improves rather in the process. Specially dainty are the petticoats with rows of lace insertion above the flouncing. Night gowns are now made often like dressing gowns, gathered at the waist, the sleeves of the bell form, and lace carried entirely down the front.

Little breakfast jackets look peculiarly fresh and becoming in this new white silk linen, simply trimmed with lace and tied with white ribbons. If the lace be torchon or Valenciennes the whole can be washed together.

I have seen very smart *fete* gowns made of this same material; and, for home wear it is a great boon, for the gowns soiled can be sent to the ordinary wash with the white thick muslins.

For *fete* gowns the fancy woolen and fancy muslins are now largely sold, and pure white in preference to cream, but they should be worn by young women and girls, for cream is more becoming to the tone of the skin when the first youth is passed.

White and gold are among the happiest combinations and the stuff itself is often worked in gold. Nothing prettier has yet been brought out than the draped bodices of soft, white silk, with black Swiss belts or braces. The material is fastened in careless knots, and looks as though arranged on the figure.

People who visit much, and those who make their bedrooms a boudior also, as so many do, are always on the lookout for something new in the way of gloves and handkerchief sachets. Some of the newest, but by no means the least costly, are made of velvet worked in the pure gold or silver thread which is used on uniforms. These are bordered with gold galon, and have a monogram in the centre. Crimson velvet is thus treated with gold, and blue with silver.

Pretty rooms require as a fit accompaniment, pretty clothing, and the most fashionable garment for bedroom wear is a saute du lit. Two of these hail from Paris. One, a vieux rose plush, striped, and pin spotted with white, lined with cream, having a sailor collar of cream corded silk, and full vest of the same; bell sleeves and no other trimming.

The other of soft white cashmere, bordered with a kilting. The belt, the round yoke, the bands dividing the puffed sleeves, worked with silk in feather stitching, more or less elaborate.

The make of bodices is much exercising the fashionable world, but the prevailing idea of the moment is the Empire gown.

I have just seen one made in soft oriental silk of a brilliant yellow tone falling in easy folds over a beautiful piece of point lace, the silk draped in points here and there, and over this falls a Directoire coat of mousse plush, the bodice bordered all around with what appeared to be an underbodice peeping from below it, of rich yellow faille edged with gold galon: this also forms the waistcoat. There is a high collar of plush, and the bodice is worn with revers of yellow silk trimmed with gold galon. This is a most effective and at the same time picturesque dress.

A tea gown in Titian red plush has equal merits; it is gathered in firm pleats at the back, and the front is draped with pink silk of the soft make.

It is fitted closely to the figure, and the fulness in the dress is confined at the waist and throat by a beautiful piece of embroidery shaped in the centre point to the figure, the tinsel threads combining all the subdued gray, brown and gold tones now so fashionable. The sleeves are of Turkish origin, opening from the elbow, the aperture bordered with handsome embroidery.

I notice young girls are wearing soft oriental silk gowns trimmed with lace or draped in easy folds in preference to tulle, and they last longer and can be more easily renovated.

A good style of Empire bodice comes up high on the shoulders, and crosses the figure in easy folds with a wide ribbon sash of moire or plush; one example was a moire ribbon embroidered in soft silk, the pattern ferns. For young married women embroidered fronts are added.

Artistic dressing is the keydote which indicates the chief novelties in fashions. For years the æsthetic schools have been teaching their lessons of beauty according to their lights, but until now they have mostly preached to deaf ears, because their work has been so rarely carried out. It has lacked finish and perfection of workmanship, which as a rule has only been produced by highly paid well-trained workpeople; for men in this lead as well as in most other industries. The reason is not far to find for they do their work better. Most of the best mantles as well as the best dresses are designed and made by men.

Very splendid are some of their handiwork made in mantles.

A velvet gauze, for example, reaching to the hem of the skirt, with stiff wired epaulettes on the shoulder, united by trimmings of jet carried across the front; a stiff jet collar at the neck, and borderings of fur on the long ends falling in front. The Henri Deux is the prevailing style of the best class of mantles, and as the Medicis originated the most cultured class of dress that has found acceptance, it is not to be regretted.

Wonderful are some of the trimmings on the best evening dresses, such as white or cream crepe lisse, embroidered with pearls, the embroidery in silk of tender tints. Paste diamonds are introduced in some of the galons, intermixed with pearls, silk and tinsel threads.

Very rich mantles are made of shot velvet nearly covered with a mass of tinsel embroidery or passementerie; these are chiefly made with tight-fitting fronts, terminating in points or mantelet ends, and with paleline sleeves and visite backs.

The sling-sleeved mantle is still worn, but "with a difference;" the sleeves instead of being turned underneath at the edge, are turned up on the outside; and are narrower than the under part; they are also cut in one at the back, which opens down the centre over a kind of plastron, narrowest at the top, and ending below the waist in a short basque.

An extremely pretty and typical model is in very fine light biege or mastic cloth; the square mantelet ends forming a pleat in the centre are bordered with gold and tinsel passementerie and fringe, and the back under the sleeves ends in a short pleated basque. The sleeves are richly braided, but the turned up part is lined with two folds of plain cloth. Passementerie epaulets and an ornament fastening the visite at the neck complete the model, which is equally pretty in grey, brown, or black.

Black lace dresses are to be very largely adopted with out-door wear with fancy jackets of all descriptions, but chiefly of cloth, and the toilet will be completed by a wide-brimmed black hat, in lace or fine straw, trimmed with a large plume of black feathers and a bunch of yellow roses.

The dresses are made in many novel ways; a good style is to arrange the sides as full panels formed of a deep flounce drawn in at intervals by ribbons run through casings and made up on a plain light-colored or shot silk foundation. Black figured and embroidered nets will be worn in the same way; the foundation skirt is of colored silk and bordered with a deep flounce or boullionne of the net; over this is a full upper skirt of net, gathered at the back and draped in front. The edge is hemmed over ribbon, and all the draperies are caught up with bows of ribbon to match.

The newest parasols have handles of wood quaintly cut and painted with enamel paint to match the covering or lining; as, for instance, a large en-tout-cas formed of alternate stripes around the frame of straw-colored ribbon and Machlin lace lined with blue faille; the handle is blue and ornamented with a large knot of straw-colored ribbon.

Odds and Ends.

ABOUT MODELLED APPLIQUE.

From time immemorial down to the present day applique has always stood high in favor with those who find in needlework an agreeable pastime and occupation. It may, therefore, interest some of the readers of THE POST to hear of a recently resuscitated form of this style of fancy work.

It is called modelled or raised applique, and is especially adapted for decorated subjects and large bold designs. Screens, door panel, mantel borders, dados for curtains, etc., are most successfully carried out in this work, which has besides the additional advantage of producing great results in a comparatively short space of time, and with a wonderfully small amount of labor.

Many kinds of fruit, large floral subjects, such as sunflowers, water lilies, iris, and all large-leaved plants, figures, quaint animals, heraldic devices, and decorative birds of all kinds are generally chosen as motifs, and look best applied to a background either of plush, velvet, or any of the rich art materials, now, fortunately, so easy to be obtained.

The process is simple. Suppose the worker has selected a spray of oranges and blossoms as a subject for her needle. Several rounds of varying sizes, slightly flattened top and bottom, must first be cut out of stout buckram or fine cardboard; one side should be covered with layers of wadding, thick in the centre, thinner at the sides; these can be covered with orange plush, cut larger than the foundation, the edges neatly turned over and secured at the back by numerous stitches, precisely in the manner flat pincushions are made. A small tuft of deep brown or black silk, worked near the centre, completes the fruit which should have a well-rounded appearance.

The leaves are also cut out in various forms (small laurel leaves from the garden form excellent models); they must be well wadded and covered with green satin in different shades. Veining is done with Japanese gold thread.

Stems and trunks of trees can be treated in several ways. Brown ribbon joined up the back, inclosing a narrow strip of wadding can be made in the required lengths, and sewn in place invisibly from the back so that no stitches show; or brown silk braid laid on in the usual way, several rows side by side, according to the desired width, answers well; but perhaps the best and the easiest method is to use thick filosel in shades of brown, couched down with a double strand of the same.

It is impossible to wad the buds and blossoms on account of their diminutive size. It is best to lightly gum a piece of cream satin on to stiff paper, cut out the shapes with sharp scissors, fasten them to the background and neatly outline in gold thread, adding centres to the flowers in shades of yellow silk. Group the fruit and foliage as naturally as possible, and secure in place, using a little strong gum and further supplementing it with a few judicious stitches from the back.

Very effective is a two-fold screen with a bold design of oranges and lemons done in this way, the sprays drooping naturally from the top on a deep maroon ground.

A quaint door I have seen has panels of deep peacock-blue plush, studded with stars of old-gold satin; a crescent moon on the left hand panel is partially obscured by a dusky flight of bats, whose plump, raised bodies are composed of brown plush, with spreading satin wings outlined with narrow braid.

On the opposite panel perches a raised horned owl in grey plush (with large yellow satin eyes with black pupils) on a branch half hidden by silvery leaves. The feathers, beak and claws are worked in silk and braid. Still water is represented by broken lines of silver braid, from which rises pale yellow satin lilies and broad leaves.

Silvery plush of a delicate greeny-gray shade composes the groundwork of the panels of another door. Tall olive satin reeds and raised brown plush bulrushes appear on the upper part, while below a dark blue swallow flits in pursuit of a sulphur-colored butterfly over creamy satin lilies and leaves floating on silver water.

A "dangle-board" decorated with a procession of mediæval animals looks quaint; and, for the benefit of those who have not met with this novelty, it will be as well to describe it. The foundation is nothing more or less than the homely domestic rolling-pin (turned down to an elegant slimness), covered with any material that may be selected, leaving a flap about 8 inches wide hanging down from it, edged with fringe.

The knobs are either painted or covered in satin and are further ornamented by a bunch of pompons. At the back of the pin are fastened six strong hooks, from which are suspended by cords or ribbons any of the numerous little articles that never seem at hand just the moment they are wanted, such as paper-knife, scissors, pincushion, scent-bottle, pencil-case, etc.

Suspended by ribbons the dangle-board forms a most useful and at the same time ornamental object for any room. Odd scraps of art material can be utilized for this work; and I am sure those who may feel inclined to try it will find it most interesting and can hardly fail to be satisfied with the result.

CLERK, to wholesale New York hardware-merchant: "Here is an order for four gross of pocket-knives from some customer who gives the name of his town, but omits the State." Merchant: "Is there no way by which you can find out the State? Where's the envelope?" Clerk: "Here it is—postmark's blurred—and here's the order with the cash. He wants four gross of pocket-knives, No. 1640, with corkscrews in back of handle." Merchant: "Send them to Kansas." N. B.—Kansas is a teetotal state.

Confidential Correspondents.

A. B. C.—Wedding cards should be sent out by the parents of the bride and paid for by them.

H. C. R.—You can clean your copper coins by rubbing them with whiting and then polishing them with wash-leather.

POX.—A note of hand is simply an acknowledgment in writing of a loan, upon which the borrower may be sued if he fails in repayment at a specified time.

MILLIE.—Where a man and woman have antagonistic religious views, and so decided as in the case you mention, it would be unadvisable for them to marry each other.

GRETA.—If you were in the wrong, it is your place to apologize. You seem to have acted very rudely, and the gentleman may not wish to resume the acquaintance.

PATTIE.—The gentleman must be one of those selfish, small-minded persons, whom it is not worth your while trying to conciliate. Let him remain "mad," if he has chosen to take offence.

NAID. — Nothing will remove actual wrinkles; oatmeal is a good thing for making the skin smooth and clear, and Turkish baths in moderation are useful, but neither of them will do away with "crows feet."

AMY.—A "Creche" is a home for the care of young children whose mothers are compelled to go out to work and leave them. A small sum is charged per day for the babies, and they are fed and attended to with motherly care.

PRENTICE LAD.—The civic crown was a wreath of oak leaves presented in ancient Rome to any soldier who had saved the life of a citizen. The recipients of the honor were always highly regarded and received with marks of public favor wherever they appeared.

PACIFIC.—It is further from Philadelphia to San Francisco than from Liverpool to Philadelphia by 216 miles. The greatest river in the world is the Missouri, which is 4100 miles long, and the largest valley in the world is that of the Mississippi. It contains 500,000 square miles.

H. S. H.—You seem to have been drawing on your imagination or some very impossible romance. We don't know of any "powerful Mexican drug likely to cause such a resemblance to death as to deceive doctors;" and we are equally unable to follow you through the rest of your improbable hypotheais.

WERNER.—The Buddhists are a large and influential sect in Eastern and Central Asia. The transmigration of souls form a part of their belief, and their creed forbids them to take the life even of the meanest and most loathsome animal. Their priests dress in yellow and lead lives of self-mortification, living in monasteries.

SAILOR BEN.—There is a good old saw which says, "Where there is love there is faith;" keep that in mind, and do not give way to fancies. If your intended has done nothing to make you uneasy, why should you torment yourself and him with doubts unworthy of you, and distressing to the man of whose love you say you are sure?

BEAVER.—The "Martello Towers," which you inquire about, are a line of round towers, built of massive stone, erected at the time that Napoleon the First was threatening England with invasion. They extend along the line of the coasts of Kent and Sussex, which face the coast of France, at the distance of about one mile apart. They are each surrounded with a deep moat or ditch, over which a drawbridge swung on chains leads into the tower.

INQUIRER.—There a certain class of people, and you appear to be one, whose ailments are aggravated, if not originated, by excessive mental sensitiveness. Brooding over supposed nervous complaints intensifies them fifty-fold. Try and shake off this feeling of self-consciousness. With that and the advice we gave you before—to take plenty of exercise and cold bathing—you ought to get well. You had better not throw up your berth on account of those feelings you speak of.

E. L.—There is nothing in this world that ensures success so completely as does perfect independence. People who are always waiting for help may wait a long time as a general thing; a little assistance, a little recommodation, a little influence, is not to be had always for the asking, but there is always something you can do for yourself. Good honest pluck and sensible independence are a dower in themselves to any woman, and there are plenty of sensible men who know it. Independence makes no woman less loving; the most helpful women are the fondest and the truest.

BUDDING A.—One of the largest publishing houses has printed these directions to authors which will suffice for you: "A manuscript should not be bound or the leaves fastened together in any way. A bound manuscript volume is cumbersome, inconvenient and often very fatiguing to the reader to handle. Let the leaves be properly paged and allowed to lie loose. The paging should always be consecutive, and not by chapters. A manuscript should not be written on a sheet larger than letter size. A smaller sheet even than letter is preferable, commercial note being quite big enough. A manuscript legibly written on small sheets is in a form most convenient for the reader—and for the printer, should it be accepted for publication."

MAYBURY.—Yours is a very common question, and one that it is impossible for anyone to answer. There is no reason why a man who is polite to people he meets in the outside world, should turn into a morose and silent creature directly he crosses the threshold of his own house, and treat his wife as if she were a servant—or at best, a landlady—whose only duty was to minister to his wants and wishes. The fact is so in many instances; the lover turns into the master after the honeymoon is over, and the wife is thought of only as someone to make his home comfortable—a being for whom no recreation or pleasure is necessary, and whose sole mission in life is to minister to the wants of the superior being. This is one way of looking at it; but there is another side of the question; the wife very often creates the state of things you complain of herself; a woman's proper sphere is home—but she may make that home so bright that it will be a haven of rest to her tired and work-worried husband, instead of a place merely to eat and sleep in. Try and be content with the lot that has shaped itself out for you; there are wives who are far more to be pitied than you, in spite of your lamentations.